


L. 12. 57

S E R M O N S

Preached upon

Several Occasions:

(Most of them)

Before the  MAGISTRATES
and JUDGES in the North-
East-Auditory of S. Giles's Church
EDINBURGH

BY

A. L. MONRO, D. D.
(Then) PRINCIPAL of the
COLLEGE of EDINBURGH.

L O N D O N,

Printed, for *Joseph Hindmarsh*, at the *Golden*
Ball over against the *Royal Exchange* in
Cornhil. MDCXCHII.

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F. R. 27

SERMONS

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Printed for J. B. Johnson, at the Golden
Ball over against the Royal Exchange in
Corahil. MDCXCIII.

lick a manner as is possible for me)
 the many kindnesses that I received
 amongst you, when I was allowed
 to preach the Gospel in my Native

**To my Friends and Ac-
 quaintances in the North-
 East Parish of S. Giles in
 Edinburgh.**

And this is the principle of it. I retain a grateful
 remembrance of the
 but reason why these Discourses do
 now appear

IF I had any other design to
 serve by this Address, than
 what was in my view
 when I preached the follow-
 ing Sermons, I would perhaps re-
 commend them to the favour of
 some particular Patron; but I ra-
 ther lay hold of this opportunity
 that I may acknowledge (in as pub-
 lick

The Epistle

lick a manner as is possible for me)
the many kindnesſes that I received
amongſt you, when I was allowed
to preach the Goſpel in my Native
Country. I was unanimouſly and
cheerfully nam'd to the Govern-
ment of the College of *Edinburgh*,
without my knowledge or inter-
poſal, by the * *Lord Provost and*
Town Council. I retain a grateful
ſenſe of it; And this is the princi-
pal reaſon why theſe Diſcourſes do
now appear. I am not ſo extra-
vagantly fooliſh, as to think that
the preſent Age needs any of my
Compoſures: if they are innocent
and well meant (though attended
with many other imperfections)
they may promote good thoughts
in ſome who heard them with Pi-
ety and Attention. They are on-
ly calculated for their Meridian.
Moſt men have different Taſts for
Books,

* *Sr. Tho-*
mas Ken-
nedy.

Dedictory.

Books, as well as for other things,
and what is sincerely intended, may
sometimes be read with greater
sugars, than more accurate Treas-
ures.

The World is very vain, and
changes its Faces and Figures every
moment; yet true Religion is inva-
riable, as the Author of it; and
therefore we are to steer our course
towards Heaven by those great
Truths that are uniformly received
amongst all Christians; and to
take heed, that we do not separate
from the Catholick Church of
Christ, her ancient Rules and Con-
stitutions by which she was pre-
served in the Primitive Ages. For
it is certain, that God did not suffer
the Universal Church to deviate
from the Apostolical Discipline,
when as yet she was furnished with

no

The Epistle

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The Epistle

no other Weapons to pull down Idolatry and Superstition, than her Unity, Prayers and Universal Charity. There is nothing more opposite to Piety and Devotion, than Pride and Vanity; and to despise the Wisdom of all our Predecessors, is, not only arrogant, but impious. The multitude and variety of later Sectaries (especially in the *Isle of Britain*) have advanced Atheism to a prodigious Impudence; and it is impossible to recover the World (now sunk in Folly and Irreligion) but by the extraordinary Zeal of good Men. The decays of Piety in our days appear openly amongst all Ranks and Orders; and this must be imputed in a great part to that Itch after Novelties, which hath so fatally overrun these Nations. Ambition and Faction, hath almost removed the distinction between
things

Dedicatory.

things *Sacred* and *Prophane* ; yet it is certain, that *the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God* ; and those pretended *Reformations* that are managed with Noise and Tumult, have ordinarily no other effects, than Sacrilege and Confusion. We are very apt to have other thoughts of God and of our selves, when we approach the Gates of Death , from those which we have entertained in the days of health and prosperity ; and if then we have the least *sense* of the World to come , we cannot but distinguish true Zeal to advance the Power of Godliness , from the insidious arts of grasping Earthly Dominion : the first is pure, calm and humble, merciful and compassionate ; the other being from the Earth , is agreeable to that Spirit that prevails in the World.

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OUR *Saviour* founded the Church a distinct Society from the World, and therefore armed it with Spiritual Laws and Censures, that she might be preserved by those Divine Helps, though all Earthly Powers should endeavour to crush her; and experience witnesses, that she hath been more Victorious over Lewdness and Infidelity, by her Patience and Sufferings, than by all her Secular Intrigues and Political Methods. When *she* stands upon the immoveable Pillars of her first foundation, her outward Splendor may be eclipsed, but her inward strength is made more firm and lasting by the Counterbatteries that are raised against her Peace and Prosperity. Truth is not ashamed and therefore it is Weakness and Pusillanimity to deny it in the face
of

Dedicatory.

of Danger and Persecution; especially when the most Sacred Foundations are daringly invaded and trampled upon: and though Ecclesiastical Politie be thought now a-days as mutable as are the *inclinations of the people*, yet they who consider things more maturely must see, that the antient Faith cannot be preserved amongst men, but in its Original Vehicles of Primitive Order and Constitution; and when the Apostolical Government of the Church is overthrown, a multitude of Errors and Delusions creep into the World, that destroy the inward Power of Godliness, as well as the outward Beauty of Publick Worship.

I AM heartily sorry, that our Country should be the Theatre of so many Complaints and Disorders,
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ders, and that the immediate Servants of the Sanctuary, both Bishops and Presbyters, should be run down with Clamour and Violence, for no other reason that I know, but because they are separated from the World to the peculiar Services of the Living God: notwithstanding of all this, we ought to *possess* our Souls in *Patience*, and to believe, that *not a hair of our head falls to the ground without our heavenly Father*. And this one Truth may compose our Spirits against all Storms and Disasters, and teach us to resign our selves without struggling to the disposal of Heaven. When we are sincerely humbled for our Sins (both National and Personal) *he will visit us again in the multitude of his tender Mercies*: and therefore it is more our duty to look unto him that
smites

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smites us, than complain of our Oppressors. It may be, that they themselves who have been most active in our Calamities, are somewhat sensible of their Cruelty; and if not, we heartily pray, that God would *bring into the way of Truth all such as have erred and are deceived.* The present Desolations of our Church may be palliated with many little Excuses, but all the Rhetorical Colours imaginable can never hide the Consequences of so monstrous a Change.

W H E N we are surrounded with Difficulties on the right and left hand, we must *make our requests known unto God by Prayer*; for he is *a present help in time of trouble.* We may meet with Crosses from the smallest things and occurrences; and perhaps our Afflictions are frequently

(a 3)

The Epistle

quently multiplied, that we may be taught to run unto God, who can either mitigate or remove them, or by *them* exercise our Patience and Magnanimity. God knows all things, but he seems to take notice more particularly of such things as we feel, and recommend to his Infinite Goodness and Compassion, so willing He is to have us depend on Him by the closest adherence.

TH E R E is nothing more pernicious to true Christian Practice, than wrong Principles. *Take heed therefore that the light which is in you be no darkness.* The fear of God makes men move with a reasonable Steadiness in all their Actions; and nothing else yields true Peace at the hour of Death; *A Conscience void of offence towards God and towards Men,* is the surest Anchor against all
our

Dedictory.

our Fears and Conflicts. God continue his Presence with you , that you may seriously lay to heart the *only One thing necessary*. This is sincerely prayed for by

Much Honoured and Well Beloved,

Your affectionate , and

much obliged Friend

and Servant ,

A L. M O N R O.

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the Earth.*

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And

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ERRATA.

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A
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O N

PSALM CXXXIX. v. 14,
15, 16, 17.

14. *I will praise thee, for I am fear-
fully and wonderfully made; marve-
lous are thy works, and that my soul
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16. *Thine eyes did see my substance yet
being unperfect, and in thy book all
my members were written, which in
continuance were fashioned, when as
yet there was none of them.*

B

17.

17. *How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them.*

Lord Verulam.

IT was the Observation of a *learn'd Philosopher* and a *great Statesman* of our neighbour Nation, That a superficial Insight into Nature inclin'd men to *Atheism*; but a more thorough view of *its* regular Methods, and the Causes of things, did necessarily lead us to the acknowledgment of the *Deity*.

Rom. I.

HIS Reason is very plain: While the Mind of Man looketh upon second Causes scattred, it may sometimes rest in them, and go no further; but when we behold the Chain of them confederate and link'd together, we must needs fly to Providence, and the contrivance of infinite Wisdom. The Impressions of the Divinity upon Nature, are so legible, that the *Apostle* concludes such inexcusable who do not acknowledge them. His most glorious Attributes are, in a manner, felt in the works of Creation, even his eternal Power and Godhead, being

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being clearly seen by the things that are made.

THE Psalmist taught this Philosophy before S. Paul, *The heavens declare the glory of God, the firmament sheweth his handy works; day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge.* Psal. 19.

There is no part of this great Fabrick of the World, which doth not direct us to a Most Mighty Being, by whom it was made. But above all the rest, the Heavens which are so vastly extended (and wherein we see so many glorious Bodies) proclaim aloud the Power, Wisdom, and Skill of that supreme Governor and Architector.

THIS Consideration transported the Psalmist unto the most heavenly Raptures and seraphick Gratulations, So we find him in the eighth Psalm. *When I consider thy heavens the works of thy fingers, the moon and stars which thou hast ordained, &c. i. e. When I look up to that celestial habitation, and consider the beauty of that admirable structure; how richly thou hast gilded the roofs of thy outer house, with the lights that shine there; I am struck down*

B 2

with

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with wonder, I know not what to say; that thou shouldst stoop so low as to take notice of man, or the highest amongst the sons of men, who dwell in houses of clay, whose foundation is in the dust.

The inconceivable distance between original Purity and Perfection and humane Misery.

De Nat. Deor.

T H I S Contemplation is so just and so natural to the Souls of Men, that it appeared frequently be-

yond the bounds of the Church. *Tully* argues pertinently from this Consideration, that it were the grossest Stupidity, the most unaccountable Folly, the most unreasonable Madness, to admit, that we our selves are endued with a Principle of Wisdom and free Election; that our Actions are managed by counsel and choice; and yet think, that the vast Machine of the World, the Harmony of all its parts, the Beauty, Order and Variety of all its wonderful productions, should be destitute of some supreme and infinitely wise Contriver; to regulate its Motions and order all its Revolutions. And this may be discovered in the whole, and through every part of it: the divine Providence displays its Artifice in the works of Nature, to the conviction of the

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the most stubborn, and the observation
of the most ignorant.

THE Lillies of the field do exceed the
glory of *Solomon*, and the little Flowers
that we overlook, preach the unimitable
Wisdom of their Creator. The Beauty
of Nature, and its Productions infinitely
surpasses the faint Endeavours of human
Skill and Invention. In the best polish'd
Steel we discern remarkable protuberan-
ces, but when we view the works of Na-
ture, whether by our eyes immediately,
or by the interposal of *Microscopes*, we
are forc'd to say with the *Psalmist*, *Mar-
vellous are thy works, and that my soul
knoweth right well.*

AND yet no part of the visible frame
of Nature points more significantly to the
Deity than the *Body of Man*, which
made the devout *Psalmist* retire into him-
self, as into the Abstract and Epitome of
the World, the Quintessence of the Cre-
ation; he had for a while ranged abroad,
his thoughts ran the circuit of the Hea-
vens, and saw, as it were, the *Deity* tu-
ning the Spheres, ruling the Orbs, or-
dering the course of the Sun: when he

perceived that secret and universal spring of Motion (the wheel within the wheels) his unfathomable Wisdom, his unlimited Goodness, his irresistible Power, his active Providence, his unsearchable Omniscience, his Eyes that pierce to the secrets that are buried in darkness; then he comes home fully satisfied, fraughted, as it were, with the purchase of his Enquiry, *I will praise thee, O God, &c.*

Galen, in his Book *De Usu Partium*, (which some say he wrote in a kind of divine Enthusiasm) the more he viewed the Skill that is transparent in the structures of human Bodies, the Wisdom and Art that shines in the formation of all the parts, the more clearly did he discover the Author of Nature. And tho he was no great Friend to Religion, yet his Philosophy constrained him to acknowledge, that there was some divine Skill, some invisible Hand that guided the motions of Nature and presided over all its actions; they appear to be ordered *pondere, numero, & mensura*, every grain weight weighed in the balance of infinite Wisdom.

WE cannot look abroad either below or above, but all things preach the *One Great Numen*, whose Power and Presence runs to and again, without whose Government and Conduct, the Elements would break their mutual league and correspondence, they would quickly jumble themselves into their original *Chaos*, and break all the Laws of Order and Beauty.

THIS is the voice of universal Nature, but made more loud and audible in the structure of Man's Body. So one of the Ancients reasons against that acute Heathen *Cecilius*; after he had considered the Heavens and the Earth, the the four Seasons of the Year, the Hills, Valleys, Trees Mountains, the Stars and their influence; he then, as it were, to strengthen his Argument, to give it the last stroke, that he might force his Adversary to yield, considers the structure of human Bodies, he invites him to admire the stately House that God built for the

Min. Fœlix, p. mihi
135. Nihil in homine
membrorum quod non &
necessitati causa sit &
decoris; & quod magis
mirum est eadem figura
omnibus, sed quædam u-
nicuique lineamenta de-
flexa, sic & similes uni-
versi videmur, & inter
se singuli dissimiles inve-
nimur.

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Soul; the five Senses plac'd in the higher rooms to view and watch over the concerns of the body, his Eye full of Life and Majesty, most useful and yet most beautiful, his erect Countenance; the convenient habitation of his Brain; his Veins, like so many channels, wherein the Blood regularly circulates; his Nerves and Arteries; his Stature, Proportion, and Features; his Arms and Limbs; the Distance, Use, and Situation of all his parts, undeniably prove the Wisdom of God, that displays it self more visibly in Man than any where else. So that (as that excellent Author reasons) 'tis hard to know, whether the Use or Ornament exceed one the other: but to be sure, both are undeniable Monuments of infinite Wisdom and Omniscience.

IT was then a blind Fancy in *Epicurus* and his Followers, to affirm, That there was no design in the contrivance of Man's Body. As if so beautiful a Fabrick had been rais'd by chance; as if the Materials had leapt together without counsel or foresight; as if they had started into this order without the direction of some wise and powerful Being; as
if

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if blind Chance (which is no cause at all) had been the Parent of Proportion and Order. But *Tully* affirms, *There is nothing so absurd but some of the Philosophers did own and defend it.* I leave this Contemplation, and let us see how far we may improve the *Psalmist's Philosophy* for the Government of our Lives. And

The Text offers two things to our Consideration.

I. The *Psalmist's* Acknowledgment and Resolution.

II. The Foundation and Ground of his Acknowledgment.

I consider the last particular in the first place; which, tho it be last in the order of the Words, is yet first in order of Nature, I mean the Ground and Foundation of his Acknowledgment,

Marvellous are thy works, and, &c.

GOD placed Man among his fellow Creatures, as Superintendent of the lower

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lower World. He is the Image of God, and in him some rays of the Divinity appear, and until such time as he fell from his Obedience by Folly and Presumption, all the lower Animals did acknowledge him as their Governour. He was plac'd upon the Theatre of the World, to hold intelligence with Heaven, to be the Mouth and publick Orator of the Creation; to admire the works of God. And he that was thus taught to admire, is himself one of the greatest Miracles in Nature. But let us improvè this Theory to direct our Christian Practice and Morals, And

First, ARE our Bodies thus curiously fram'd, then certainly they ought not to be abus'd to the vilest drudgeries of Sin. Why did God build such beautiful Tabernacles? Did he design this stately Habitation to be the receptacle of wild and furious Passions, and unbridled Appetites; to be the dwelling-house of unclean Spirits? Is it usual with wise and considerate Men to bestow so much cost and pains in building Houses for keeping the filthiest Creatures? Do Men erect stately Palaces for the meanest uses? No
certainly

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certainly. No more did God design that our Bodies that are so wonderfully made, should be the instruments of unrighteousness. To this purpose the Apostle exhorts, *Rom. 12. v. 1. I beseech you by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living Sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.* And again, *1 Cor. 6. v. 19. Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? How clear and solid is the Consequence, v. 20. You are bought with a price, wherefore glorifie God in your bodies and in your spirits which are Gods.* It was on this Consideration again, that he exhorts the *Thessalonians, 1 Epist. 4. v. 4. That every one should know how to possess his vessel (the Tabernacle where the Soul dwells) in sanctification and honour.*

THE Nimbleness and strength of the body is not to be prostituted to Sloath, Idleness and Luxury, those Vices thwart the design of God, cross the purposes of our Creator, baffle and affront the kindness of our great Benefactor. Therefore we are taught by the curious Fabrick of our Bodies, to remember, that God takes special notice how we employ them.

them. *Psalm 194. 2. Understand, O ye brutish among the people, and ye fools when will ye be wise; he that planted the ear shall he not hear, and he that formed the eye shall he not see?*

LET me add to this that God is to be worshipped with the Body as with the Mind. For he made both, redeemed both, and will glorifie both. I need not prove this, it were a reflection on the Gravity of my Hearers to offer any ptoof of that nature. But there are amongst us who have banished the Worship of the Body out of our Churches; to bow their knees, or to stand upright at some of the more solemn pieces of Worship, is thought Superstition; and they measure the Purity of Religion, by its Rusticities and Undecencies; and think that they are never got far enough from *Rome*, unless they oppose all the decent Customs of the civilized World. As if the Eternal Majesty of Heaven, were to be approached contrary to the Custom of all Nations, the Devotion of all Churches, and the common Sense of all Mankind.

THE Devotion of such resembles the Superstition of those Pagans, that Strabo mentions, that offered none of the Flesh of their sacrifices unto their Gods, but affirmed that the Gods were contented with the Blood only, as if they had no regard to the Externals of their Worship. The behaviour of some of us, in the time of God's worship, would not become us, in the presence of our Governours. But customary and universal Faults are not so easily reformed, and some of them the more they are reproved, the more incurable they become.

Secondly, Is the Body so curiously framed? Is this brittle and mortal Edifice so artificially reared? Are there such prints of the Finger of God on this Tabernacle, even whilst we are here? then judge what it will be, when it is raised from the dust, when it shakes of the dishonours of the grave, and appears with its Robes of Light; when this unwieldy clog of Flesh and Blood is made pure and aerial, nimble enough to vie with the swiftest Angels and fly with ease in the regions of Glory; when we shall be all

all Life, Light, Spirit, and Wing, fellow-sharers of Angelical Pleasure. Now the earthly Tabernacle drags and pulls down the Soul to low and despicable Enjoyments; then, the Body is made strong and refined, to comply with the highest Capacities and Inclinations of the Mind.

WE shall mount aloft from the Earth unto the Air, where his imperial Throne is erected. *We shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and as the stars for ever and ever*; when we are got loose from the Prisons of the Grave, and the Fetters of Corruption knocked off; but now in our present state, how hard is it for us to raise our thoughts to the Liberties of the Sons of God!

WHEN we have our feet upon the top of Mount Zion; when we see the Glories and Empires of this little Globe below us, and we our selves beyond Danger and Temptation, far above its frowns and flatteries.

How will our Souls be transported to find their Garments lighter; and our selves

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selves encircled in the arms of Divine Love? and instead of this lumpish Clay, this load that damps and depresses our Spirits, the weight that holds them in fetters and captivity, *we shall then be* ^{2 Cor. 5.2.} *cloathed upon with our house which is from heaven, when mortality shall be swallowed up of life, and the shackles of our bondage broken to pieces.*

THE very thoughts of this pure and ^{Ang.} *Angelic* state, if they dwelt seriously upon our Spirits, might crack the strings that tie our Souls to our Bodies; to think that when *he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.*

WE cannot express the glory of the Body after the Resurrection better, than in the language of the Scriptures. *There* ^{1 Cor. 15.} *is one glory of the sun, another of the* ^{41.} *moon, and another glory of the stars; so also is the Resurrection of the dead, it is sown in corruption, raised in incorruption; 'tis sown in dishonour, raised in glory; 'tis sown in weakness, raised in power; 'tis sown a natural body, raised a spiritual body. Thus we are told by*
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the same *Apostle* to the *Philippians*, that *he shall change our vile bodies, that they may be fashioned like his glorious body, by the power whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself.* With what confidence then may we lay them down in their grave, since we are sure to receive them again pure and incorruptible, beyond the Weaknesses and Indispositions of their former Captivity.

Job. 528. *The hour is coming when all that are in their graves shall hear his voice, we may triumphantly apply to our selves that place in the book of Job, 19. 25. I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth, and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God.*

Thirdly, ARE our Bodies such curious Representations of his Wisdom and Skill? then we should treat them honourably and decently after the Soul is departed. The first Christians had a great care that the poorest of their number should be handsomely interr'd, and many times did they dress the bodies of
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the meanest Christians with costly Ointments and odoriferous Spices ; that they might do honour to the human Nature, and testify their hope of the *Resurrection* ; that the dear Companions of the Soul might be decently treated, and laid in their graves as in their safe repositories, until the general summons of the *Arch-Angel* awakened them.

WHEN their Enemies observed their great care of the Bodies of the *Martyrs*, (to do the Christians despite) they burnt the Bodies of their dead, and scatter'd their Ashes in the Sea, lest the Christians might have the satisfaction of doing the common offices of humanity to their deceas'd Relations. Certainly the Bodies of the dead should be preserved from all rude Affronts and Dishonours, and *Churchyards*, that are the Seminaries of the *Resurrection*, should not be places of pasturage for all kind of Animals. And would to God that the Laity only were to be blam'd for this impious Prophanation.

BUT *Fourthly*, Are our Bodies so curiously built ? Judge what the Soul must

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must be, that Lamp of Light, that Candle of the Lord, the invisible Jewel that's laid up in that Casement; 'tis no less than the Breath of God, it bears the Image of the Deity in legible Characters. How active and indefatigable is it in the search of Truth? How much above the Enjoyments of Sense, and seculeat Pleasures of the Body? With what transport doth it embrace Conclusions drawn from their Principles? How fond is it of its own Contemplations, that are raised on the immoveable Pillars of Reason?

How swifts in its Thoughts? How easily does it fly round the Earth, climb the Heavens and view the Creation? 'Tis a divine Spark of Light, from the Father of Spirits, that glances in those prisons of flesh for a while; it's true Pleasures are pure and Angelical; it grasps Truth for the sake of Truth, with Order and Complacency, and makes to it self Ladders of true Consequences from the visible Creatures, to ascend to Heaven.

BUT let us dwell a while longer on this

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this Meditation. Did God furnish our Minds with such noble Powers only to till the Ground, *and make provision for the flesh to fulfil the Lusts thereof?* No certainly. This vast and capacious Spirit, that than lodge so many Truths together without Confusion or Disorder, was design'd to enjoy God; any thing else falls short of its Height and Grandeur.

WHENCE is this Appetite of Immortality that we feel within our selves? Is it altogether in vain? Did God place it within our Souls purely to vex us? Was there nothing design'd to satisfy it? Yes certainly; else Mankind had been a phantastick Impertinence; the vainest and the silliest nothing in the Creation. *For if in this life only we had hope, we were of all men the most miserable;* confined to the Earth, when our Souls fly far beyond it; and immured in the Walls of Flesh, when their Capacities dispose them for the Life and Enjoyment of Angels.

ALL the rest of the Creatures have Objects proper for their Appetites; shall

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Man alone have Inclinations beyond the Earth, and yet die like the Beasts that perish? Let no such thought enter our Souls, for *we shall see him as he is.*

LET me add to this, If the Soul be so vivacious in its Walls of Flesh, when 'tis chained in this dark Tabernacle, that (as *Quintilian* observes) it flies in a trace from one Object to another, nothing can engross its power and strength: how large and comprehensive must it be, when we come to our Countrey above; when we are united to the original Wisdom, Light and Truth? What a foolish violence doe we offer to our Souls, when we bend and bow them to earthly Enjoyments? Why did we not rather let them fly to the place of their rest and tranquility? Their natural motion is towards Heaven, and Christian Religion designs no more than their Primitive Liberty.

WHEN we would persuade Men to be religious, we need not borrow our Arguments from foreign Topicks; let them only look inwards; let them view the frame of their own Souls, their
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Knowledge, Will and Memory; the uneasie Reflections of their Consciences when they do amiss, it makes them taste, whether they will or not, the fears of an impartial Tribunal; that drags them, in the midst of their Jollities, before that Judge that can neither be deceived nor be imposed upon.

HEAR then the calm Reasonings of your own Spirits; you may shift the force of our Arguments, when we have urged them with all Zeal and Sincerity; but you cannot hide your selves from that invisible Judge, your own Souls.

IT were Folly in the highest degree, to feed a hungry Stomach with wise Sayings, excellent Diagrams: or if such things were offered for the cure of a Man in a raging Fever; this is the Folly we transcribe when we endeavour to satisfy our Souls with any thing short of God himself; the Satisfaction and Happiness that we look after is higher than the Earth. The Earth says it is not in me; and the Sea says it's not in me; and the Treasures of both the *Indies* have nothing in them to feed the strong

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Desires of Immortality, or to fill the Appetite of Reason.

BUT *Fifthly*, Are our Sou's and Bodies such Monuments of the Divine Wisdom? should we not then frequently view and consider our own Frame and Composition. Why are we such Strangers to our selves? *When the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the great deep*, the rest of the Creatures were formed in their order, as they were commanded to appear; *by his word, that commanded things which are not as if they were*; they were inded the more negligent strokes of Omnipotence; but MAN appears by his deliberate Method, and set off with the Characters of his Image, in Wisdom, Purity, Liberty, Immortality. What Majesty in these Words, *Come, let us make Man in our own Image*? And if the very rubbish of this Edifice, the ruines of him in his lapsed Condition be so magnificent; what was he, when
Psal. 8. 5. but a little lower than the Angels, crowned with glory and dignity? Especially when we remember that still he is capable of such Improvements. Recover him by Education from his childish Vanities,

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nities, from his untamed Lust and Passions, furnish him with Health, Strength, all Wisdom divine and humane, invest him with publick Honour and Attendance, and then he is but some degrees *below the Angels of God*. And yet all this is but a shadow and a dream, in compare with what Improvements he is capable of, *when regenerate to the Image of God, and the hope of Glory*.

ARE not we our selves then worthy of our most serious thoughts? True Religion teaches a Man to converse with himself in the noblest manner, to cover the highest Improvements of his own Nature, to observe his own Failings. *Seneca* tells us in one of his *Epistles*, that it was his custom every Night when the candle was out, calmly to examine himself, and look narrowly into the Retirements of his own Conscience; this, often and seriously performed, begat Calmness and Serenity in his Bosom, which he compares to the Regions above the Moon, where there are no Clouds, no Vapours, no Exhalations.

BUT a wicked Man is afraid to look within himself; the violent Earthquakes and shakings of his Spirit, make those Reflections intolerable. Did we thus take our selves more accurately to task, we would not have so much spare time, to descant on the Actions of others; we should be more merciful in our Censures, less severe in our Reflections, more equitable and just in all our Proceedings. When *Pausanias* the *Lacedemonian* desired *Simonides* the Poet to bestow some memorable Saying upon him, he gave him this, *Remember that you are a Man.*

AND indeed this contained a Compend of the best *Philosophy*; did we remember that we are the Offspring of God, could we prostitute so noble a Nature to serve the Devil? could we debase our selves so far as to truckle under the Violence and Servitude of our Passions.

L. 3. Off. *Tully* hath an admirable Saying to this purpose; Put the case, saith he, that we should carry any thing so privately, as that neither God nor man should discover us, yet we should have such a reverence

rence for our selves, as not to suffer any thing that is immodest, unjust, or unclean to escape us. So terrible is the witness of Conscience, and so infallible is its decision, in the great branches of our Duty.

THEN *Sixthly*, Is Man such a curious piece of workmanship? he must be under the peculiar Eye of Providence? Thus reasons *St. Paul*, *Doth God take care of Oxen, yes, the very Law; thou shalt not muzzle the Ox that treadeth out the corn*; prove sufficiently, that they are under his care, and the eye of his Providence.

BUT the care that is extended to those poor Animals that feed upon hay and corn, is far below the special care that he hath of Mankind. His delight is with the Sons of Men; there is a peculiar eye of Favour that watches over the human Race, and yet a higher degree of Love and Providence over good and holy Men.

Psal. 33. 13. The Lord looketh from heaven,

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heaven, he beholdeth all the sons of men. v. 14. From the place of his habitation he looketh upon the inhabitants of the earth. v. 18. Behold the eye of the Lord is on them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy. Psal. 34. 7. The Angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them. But his Love towards Mankind is so strong, that it cannot fall under Words. *He gave us his Son, and if he gave us his Son, how shall he not with him also give us all things. He did not take hold of the nature of Angels, but of the seed of Abraham. It was his Love to us that engaged him to take upon him the form of a servant, and humble himself unto death, even the death of the cross.*

Seventhly, IF God hath put such Marks of Beauty and Honour on the human Nature, *Let us love one another. So the Apostle enjoins, Honour all men; Love the brotherhood.* There is something due to our Nature, under the cloud of the meanest Circumstances: As the *Philosopher* alleged, when he dispensed his Alms to an unworthy Person, *Non homini sed humanitati.* Our Love must

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must resemble the Benignity of God, that *maketh his Sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth down Rain on the just and unjust.*

LOVE is the life of Heaven, whence all Bitterness and Unkindness is banished as far as Hell; 'tis planted in our Nature, we are enclined to it by our original Constitution; it is the Livery of the Christian Religion, and the Badge of our Profession. The Vices opposite to it make up the Devil's Nature and his Torture too; Anger, Bitterness, Envy and Revenge, create those Storms that continually ruffle the composure of our Spirits; whereas the Practice of Christian Charity hath in it the Fore-tastes of Heaven, and the Life of the Blessed.

THERE is no injury done to us can loose us from this Obligation; no Error in Opinion; no Enormity in Practice; no Disaster of Fortune; for our Brother is of our kind, and however sullied and defact, retains still the Image of God. The more frequently we consider this, the more we are obliged to the *Psalmist's* resolution,

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I will praise thee. Which leads me to the *Second* Particular that I mentioned, *viz.* The *Psalmist's* Gratitude and Acknowledgment.

NOW in speaking to this, I shall *First* Mention some of those Inducements that oblige us to it. And then *Secondly* press the Practice of it.

I. GOD is to be praised, because he is the only Object of Praise, Love and Admiration; nothing else can love us again but God, or some other Creature that resembles God. Therefore St. *John* exhorts, *Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world, if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.*

AND if he is to be praised because of the Works of Nature, how much more because of his inestimable Love in the Redemption of the World by our Lord *Jesus Christ*. Let the purest Spirits, in their Robes of Light and Innocence, admire it, and veil their Faces with their Wings, and stand at a distance, and *behold what manner of Love*
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this is, wherewith the Father hath loved us, that we should be called the Sons of God. If we cannot fly about the World with that Swiftneſs and Rapidity as the Angels do in Heaven, yet what hinders our Souls to center themſelves in his Love by the moſt unquenchable Ardors, when we contemplate his Love to Mankind manifested in Jeſus Chriſt ?

2. THE true exerciſe of our Reaſon requires it. What is that you admire ? or what is it you purſue ? The Principles of Reaſon are everlaſting, and they are never ſo duly placed as on God ; *who is invariable and without ſhadow of turning ; for the world paſſeth away, and the faſhion thereof doth periſh* : but a Mind refined by the Principles of Chriſtian Philoſophy endures for ever. Do but call to mind, as *M. Antoninus* hath it, ſuch as *Cap. ult.* have been in eminent Glory, the Hero's and Captains of former Ages ; or ſuch as have been tumbled down by Diſgrace, or run down with Miſery ; ſuch as have engaged to talk of all Men in every Condition of Life, *πῶς νῦν πάντες ἔμενον*. What's become of all thoſe things now ? And ſhould our Reaſon ſpend

spend its strength in the chase of such Shadows, it cannot be duly employed in such transient Vanities; had we but a view of the Impertinencies and Vanities that pass in one City, but for one day, how vain should we find the World to be!

3. To praise God, is the Enjoyment of Heaven. The vision of God, is nothing but the Light of Reason duly fix'd on its true Object, and advanc'd to its true Elevation, when the Soul is dilated and enlarged, and expatiates on its proper Theme. Have you seen the Cedars or the Fir-trees, that rise so high, and spread their Branches so wide, from a little Seed; just so is the Soul, how infinitely beyond its present self are its Operations then found to be. *Beloved,*
17oh. 3.2. now are we the Sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Thus the Inhabitants of Heaven are frequently represented in the book of the *Revelations*, c. 4. 10, 11. and elsewhere, adoring the Excellencies of their great Creator. *The four and twenty Elders fall down*

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down before him that sat on the throne, and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, honour, and power, for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created. And again, chap. 5. v. 13. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, blessing, honour, glory, and power, be unto him, that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever.

4. 'TIS the Voice of universal Nature.
Vide Psal. 148.

5. THIS is it that keeps us sober and humble, and makes us refer our prosperous Successes to their true Original; and by this frame of Spirit, we engage the divine Aid, we are apt to idolize our own Strength, Wisdom, and Contrivance, when any thing answers our Expectations; we are ready to erect Statues and Memorials to our own Conduct, as if we our selves had brought the affair to its desirable period. Thus
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the ungrateful Person is said by the *Prophet Habbakuk*, c. 1. 16. to *sacrifice to his net; and burn incense to his dray*: how elegantly does the *Royal Psalmist* trace his Mercies to their true Original? how pathetically does he summon our Thoughts towards Heaven?

Psal. 44. v. 3. For they got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them, but thy right hand, and thine arm, and the light of thy countenance. v. 7. I will not trust in my bow, neither shall my sword save me; in God we boast all the day long, and praise thy name for ever and ever. This Conclusion is laid down by *Solomon* long ago, *Eccles. 9. 11. The race is not to the swift, nor the battel to the strong, nor bread to the wise, nor riches to men of understanding, nor favour to men of skill.*

TIS neither the Strength of thy Body, nor the Wisdom of thy Mind, nor the Favour of thy Friends, can accomplish thy business without the Aids of divine Providence; how chearfully then should we adore and acknowledge this Providence, that twists it self with, and
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secretly moves the most intricate affairs, Psal. 115. *Not unto us O Lord! not unto us, but unto thy name give glory:* So we find Job elegantly vindicate himself, *that he did not put his confidence in any thing but in God only,* Job 31. 26, 27.

Psal. 108. 3, 4. *I will praise thee O Lord! amidst the people, I will sing unto thee among the Nations; for thy mercy is great unto the heavens, and thy faithfulness unto the clouds; and* Psal. 139. 17. *How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them, if I should count them, they are more in number, than the sand, when I awake I am still with thee.* But,

6. THIS is the only Theme which cannot be exhausted, Psal. 139. *If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there, &c. Heaven, Earth, Sea, and Air, proclaim his infinite Goodness, and the thought of every thing perishes, but in its relation to God: for if you view it under any other relation, it is but vanity and vexation of Spirit, and hath not solidity enough, to abide the porings and contemplations of an intellectual Being.*

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WHAT employment more proper for us, than that of the glorious Hosts of heaven, the invincible Legions who have Crowns on their heads, and Palms in their hands, and the glorious company of the Apostles, the goodly fellowship of the Prophets, the noble Army of Martyrs, the Seraphims, and the Cherubims, who are thus employed; what exercise more proper for us, who breath for heaven, than to say with the *Psalmist*, Plal. 45. *I will extol thee my God, O King! and I will bleſs thy name for ever and ever, v. 2. every day will I bleſs thee, and I will praise thy name for ever and ever; v. 3. Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised, and his greatness is unsearchable. v. 4. One Generation shall praise thy works to another.*

To God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, be all Praise, and Dominion for ever. Amen.

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I P E T. 2. V. I I.

Dearly Beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the Soul.

FROM the ninth Verse, the Apostle sets off the Dignity of the Christian State, the Honour and Prerogative of that high relation: *Ye are a chosen generation, a Royal Priesthood, an holy Nation, a peculiar people. They were thus advanc'd, that they might shew forth the praises of him that had called them, out of darkness, into*

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his marvellous light. They could not but with the highest contentment and joy, call to mind, the difference between their present and their former condition.

IT is upon this foundation, that *S. Peter* makes his address with so much love and zeal, that he may provoke them to a life pure and heavenly, and becoming that relation into which they were lately adopted.

IN the *Verse* that I have read, he alludes unto the Phrase that he made use of, in the first *Verse* of the first Chapter of this *Epistle*, which is address'd to the strangers scattered throughout *Pontus*, *Galatia*, *Cappadocia*, *Asia* and *Bythnia*, remov'd far from the Country and Habitation of their Ancestors. It was easie for them (from the consideration of their *Earthly Pilgrimage*) to remember that they were not only strangers, with regard to that Country; but in a higher sense, strangers upon Earth, a people distinguished from the World. And not only so, but quite contrary unto it, and far above it in their aims, studies, and desires.

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THAT which takes up the thoughts, the talk, and the admiration of Mankind, was so little valued by our Saviour, that when he cloth'd himself with our flesh, he drew up a System of Religion, that ruin'd the esteem that such things had got in our affections; *the lusts of the eyes, the lusts of the flesh, and the pride of life*, did in a manner, command the Adorations of Jew and Gentile. He stript those Idols of that meretricious varnish and paint, that had for a long time inveigled Mankind; and he made himself of no reputation, that he might trample upon human glories, and raise our affections to that honor which is solid and durable. He exemplify'd his Precepts in his own practice; and by a new *Philosophy* raised mens Spirits to a clear sight of God, to a just value of themselves; and consequently, to the highest contempt of the World, in all its pomps and fantastick appearances.

THE Exhortation that I have read, is so essential to the Christian Religion, that it is enforc'd by its strongest arguments, every one may see it to be the natural result and consequence of such

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heavenly Premisses, *that we should abstain from fleshly lusts*; because *they war* (or set themselves in battel array) *against the Soul.*

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BY *Fleshly Lusts*, I understand, those passions, lusts, and desires, that unregenerate men do pursue, with all the strength, and vigor of their Soul; whether they proceed from covetousness, ambition, or sensuality. And though I understand the words in this extent and latitude; yet I design to level the most part of my Discourse against fleshly lusts in the strictest sense; as they signifie all manner of uncleanness, contrary to chastity. General Discourses against vice, are seldom successful towards the recovery of men from under their dominion: and therefore when we assault the body of death, we must level our strokes against particular limbs, and members, as the surest, and the speediest way to our victory.

BUT that I may discourse with the better success, let us consider *First*, the Exhortation it self, *Abstain from fleshly lusts*, and this Exhortation is strengthen'd with
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a twofold Argument; one is taken from the opposition of such lusts to the Soul; and the other taken from our present state, condition, and relation : *We are but pilgrims and strangers.*

Now that I may make those fleshly lusts as odious to the Christian eye, as is possible; I will in the first place lay before you some considerations, to represent them in their true and proper colors. And Secondly, I will offer those Remedies from Reason and the holy Scriptures, by which we may be defended against their assaults.

First, Do but consider, that those fleshly lusts are directly opposite unto the Nature, Spirit, and Tendency of Christianity. It was our *Saviour's* great design, when he took upon him our Nature, to fortifie our Spirits beyond the reach of bodily impressions; to establish them in an absolute Empire and just Sovereignty over the Senses; to exalt that part of us, that is divine and heavenly to its true elevation, that it might no more truckle under the body; that the senses, and all the motions that we feel

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by them, might be kept at their true distance, and not meddle with that command and authority that belongs to the mind. In a word, that our Souls might be adorn'd with their true Glory and Majesty. When we are thus set at liberty, then, and not till then, are we *free indeed*; when we remember the value, strength, and excellency of the Soul, which (though it be united to the Body, and therefore must mind the concerns of the Body, with great care and tenderness, yet) it more vigorously desires to be united unto God. It may subsist without its Union to the Body, but it cannot be happy, unless it be united unto God, so that this Union of the Soul with God is in a manner folded up in its very nature, and essence.

WE are in the strictest sense the offspring of God, and it was reasonable for us to expect, that when the Son of God did appear to reform Mankind, he should level his Directions and Precepts against those vices and sins, most vigorously, that did sink the Soul below its true glory and dignity; the sins that took down its Plumes, by which it mounted the heavens,

vens, but now was become soft, trifling, and degenerate. And because no lusts did break the vigour of our mind, and blunt the edge of our Spirits, and weaken our union with God, more than fleshly lusts in the strictest sense; therefore do we find the cautions against those sins so frequent in the New Testament, with this assurance, that *he that is in Christ Jesus hath crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts thereof.*

THE Arguments that S. Paul makes use of against those sins are heavenly and sublime. 1 Cor. 6. 19, 20. *Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, and you are bought with a price, therefore glorify God, in your bodies and in your spirits, which are Gods.* Answerably to this, we find that the first Christians (notwithstanding of the blackest Calumnies of their Pagan adversaries) lived the life of Angels in earthly Bodies; their Chastity was so great a Jewel in their eyes, that many of their Christian Women most cheerfully resign'd their life, rather than part with their honour. And Tertullian, towards the close of his *Apology*, resolutely defies the impudence

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pudence of the *Pagans*: for they themselves did acknowledg the purity and innocence of the Christians in this matter; because they judg'd it a more intolerable punishment for their Women to be condemned to the *Stewes*, than to suffer *Martyrdom*. How many of the Christian Women among the *Romans*, when the *Goths* and *Vandals* made their Irruption into *Italy*, threw themselves into *Tyber*, rather than be expos'd to the savage Embraces of lust and dishonour? The Story of the young man recorded by *S. Jerom* is very memorable, who, feeling himself entangled in the embraces of a wanton Strumpet, did bite off his own Tongue, and spit it in her face, lest the strength of his temptation, and the weakness of humane nature, might betray him into Indecencies unbecoming his holy Profession. We see then, it is most certain and clear, that fleshly lusts are in their nature and tendency, contrary to that Religion, which our *Saviour* planted, and the first Christians embrac'd.

But *Secondly*, **LET** us remember, that these fleshly lusts are severely punish'd both

both here and hereafter. We are told by Solomon, Prov. 6. 26. *that by means of a whorish woman, a man is brought unto a piece of bread.* And the Parable of the Prodigal, in the fifteenth of S. Luke, represents the miserable estate of such with great advantage; the sufferings that those lusts expose men to are not confin'd to one single capacity, but they spread their Poison not only through the body, reaching sometimes even beyond the bones, into the marrow; but also through all the suffering capacities of human nature; health, fortune, life, and reputation are the ordinary Sacrifices that are brought to the Altars of this unclean Devil. Solomon again tells us, Prov. 66. 33. *That a wound and dishonour is his reward, and his reproach shall not be wiped away.* Have you sometimes observed the macerated Skeletons of Lust worn in the Devils warfare, bearing the dishonourable marks of their Masters service, sometimes in their foreheads, to such a degree of infamy, that hardly one would think, that Mankind could be made so miserable? And though those Trophies of Misery have frequently been displayed, to the scandal of Religion,

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disgrace of human nature, and the terror of all Spectators; yet so inconsiderate are the most part of Mankind, and so stupifying is the Enchantment, that it requires a heavenly frame, and a bold Resolution, to subdue those imperious and stubborn lusts.

How many did God remarkably punish for this sin: Numb. 25. *Zimri* and *Cozbie* were slain in the very act, and four and twenty thousand of the Children of Israel fell for their unlawful mixture with strange Women. And though God had left those filthy Creatures without Punishment, yet the sin carries corruption in its Nature; for he that soweth to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption, in the most literal sense. Add to all this, the flames of unquenchable fire, that are prepared for the Sons of Lust and Wantonness in the other World. They may possibly escape the notice and observation of earthly Judges; but when the hidden things of dishonesty are brought to light, then Heb. 13. 4. *God will judge whoremongers and adulterers.*

Thirdly,

Thirdly, CONSIDER that those who give way to this kind of sensuality, are become stupid and irrecoverable, Prov. 23. 27. *A whore is a deep ditch, and a strange woman is a narrow pit.* Such as are immerst in and deluded with this enchantment, may be compar'd unto the Companions of *Ulysses*, who could not be brought back to their Ships, but by Whips and Rods, when once intoxicated with the juice of that Herb amongst the *Lotophagi*. We are told by *Solomon*, Prov. 27. 22. *That though you should bray a fool in a Morter, yet will not his folly depart from him.* So apposite is the similitude that he makes use of, to express the folly and fortifhness of the Man, that is entangled by the artifice and insinuations of a Whore, Prov. 7. 22. *He goeth after her, as an Ox goeth to the slaughter; the one sees not his danger, no more than the other, and as a fool to the correction of the stocks.* Such is his stupidity, he marches fast forward unto the fatal period of irrecoverable Impenitence, whence there is no returning, Matth. 12. 43. *When the unclean spirit is gone out of a Man, he walketh through dry*

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dry places seeking rest, and finding none, &c. The Devil hath the character of the unclean Spirit fastned upon him by special propriety. I might add to this, that though by our Nature, we are a little lower than the Angels, yet those fleshly lusts do sink us below the beasts that perish.

BUT in the second place, I promised from the Holy Scriptures to offer those Remedies that are most effectual to restrain, and cure those vicious Inclinations. And,

I. LET us maintain a lively sense of Gods universal presence, *to whose eyes all things are naked and open: for the night, and the light, are both alike to him.* Did we dwell on the thoughts of his Nature with steadfastness and reverence, how easily would these Meditations quench and dissipate the fiery darts of the Devil? Did we keep the eye of our Soul fixt on his Purity, those impure Spirits durst not lodg within our bosoms. 'Twas this that kept the modest and generous Soul of Joseph free and untainted,

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tainted, *Gen. 39. 9.* amidst the caresses and solicitations of an imperious whorish Woman.

This sense of his presence, is like the Angel, that with a flaming sword guarded Paradise. Our hearts thereby become (what *Solomon* says of the Church), *Cant. 4. 12. A garden inclosed, and a fountain sealed.* This is it that banishes vain thoughts, idle musings, and lustful fancies from the mind, *Prov. 4. 23. Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life.* And *Matth. 23. 26. Cleanse first that which is within the Cup and Platter, that the outside of them may be clean also.* If this fire be not smother'd and quench'd within, it will break out upon all occasions, unto unhandsom significations of that distemper that the Soul is sick of. Therefore that we may attain a masculine and a solid habit of Spirit, proof against those temptations, that shake and disturb filly Souls: Let us maintain a constant Conversation in heaven; Let us dwell with God until we feel him, and the beams of his Majesty and Power, suppressing all inordinate motions within us.

us. By this our Souls are taught to fly aloft above those feculent Exhalations, that blindfold the more unwary and vagrant Spirits.

AND next to this, let me 2. advise the keeping a strict guard over our senses, It was the resolution of *Job*, *He made a Covenant with his eyes*; and the Prayer of *David*, *Psalm 119. 37. Turn away my eyes from beholding vanity.* And our Saviour insinuates how soon the Soul is fired by those windows. Add to this, that we should be careful of our company. *Can a man* (saith *Solomon*) *carry fire in his bosom, and not be burnt?* We are to shun the Discourses and filthy Communications of men of corrupt minds. It was generously done of *Alexander the Great*, to reject the overture made to him by some of his Flatterers of visiting the Wife and Daughters of *Darius* when taken Captive in the War, because so much commended for their exquisite Beauty: He said, it was very unbecoming, and disgraceful, that he, so famous a Conqueror, who had overcome so many men, should expose himself to the hazard of being overcome by Women.

men. In this he was truly more triumphant than in all his Victories besides: and *Solomon* proves, that he that overcomes himself is more generously victorious, than he that taketh a City; the Conquest of the one lies much in the Valour of Souldiers, Conduct of Captains, Strength of Armies; and all these things may be in the possession of one remarkable for Vice and Folly: but the Victory over a Man himself, proceeds certainly from his more divine half, gaining ground of his earthly and sensual part. Here then lies the true Excellency of our Nature, that we are recovered from under the Dominion of Sensuality, to that Sovereignty over the Senses, which is the Birth-right of the Soul.

3. THE most apposite Remedy that we can advise men to, for the restraint of fleshly Lusts, is *Fasting* and *Prayer*. And to tell freely what I think in this matter, most of all the carnal Vices owe their beginning and growth to the neglect of this Duty of *Fasting*; which I cannot so properly call a particular Duty, as a safe and sure Antidote against all Vice, especially when it is attended with *fer-*

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vent Prayer and Devotion. Our Saviour seems to join them both together in *S. Matthew 26. 41. Watch and Pray, that ye enter not into temptation.* And 'tis most certain that a full Belly is not proper for Watching, and as improper for fervent Prayer. This is acknowledged by the light of Nature; the *Pagans* at all times when any thing extraordinary threatened their Peace and Happiness betook them to Fasting and Prayer; so severe was the Fast enjoind by the *King of Nineve.* And therefore our Saviour made Fasting no new Precept of his Religion; but only gives Directions about it; that the performance of it may be kept safe from Hypocrisie, Ostentation, and Superstition. All Philosophers that endeavoured to advance Morality to any degree of Reputation, judg'd it very worthy of their Practice; not only for the Sobriety of the Mind, but also for the Health of the Body; even *Epicurus* himself had his fasting days. Tho we had not immortal Souls to save, tho we had not the View of so glorious a Crown and Prize; yet when we remember how many are the Errors of our daily Conversation; how apt we are to mis-
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carry in the conduct of our ordinary business; and how fond we are of our Mirth, Friends, and our ordinary Delights, and how readily our most accurate Reasonings may deceive us; how quickly our Tongues pour out those things that are dishonourable to God, hurtful to our Neighbours, nauseous to our Friends, and disgraceful to the Christian Religion; I should think that we have more than ordinary Inducements to oblige us to set apart some Portions of our time to converse with God, and with our own Souls. That we who see Motes in our Neighbours eyes, may at last pull out the beam out of our own.

WHEN we read of the strict Diet of the *Apostles*, to which they were tied by the common Law of Christianity, and withal remember their ordinary Entertainment from the World; a Catalogue whereof we have in 2 *Cor.* 6. v. 4, 5, 6, 7. *In all things approving your selves as the ministers of God, in much patience, afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings.* I say, when we call to mind, that this was

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their entertainment, one would think, there needed no more to keep their flesh within bounds, and under the perfect command of Religion. And yet we find, that the same *Apostle* last cited, did use voluntary chastisements and restraints towards himself, that he might be wholly disengaged from all fleshly solicitations, 1 Cor. 9. 26, 27. *I therefore so run, not as uncertainly, so fight I not as one that beateth the air, but I keep under my body, and bring it unto subjection, lest that by any means when I have preached to others, I my self should be a cast away.*

AND it is most certain, the reason why we are not so successful in our resolutions against vice and folly, is that we are not so particular in our choice of particular means and methods against particular sins. *When we beat the air* (in the language of the *Apostle*), and never aim our strokes at particular sins; we hover, and are bewilder'd in the midst of many indefinite projects and fancies; if we resolutely fight against the body of death, we must wound it in some particular limb, before the strength of

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of the whole be taken down. And therefore I would heartily advise all serious men, in their retirements to single out some particular sin, to which they find themselves more inclin'd, for the object of their special resistance. And this method hath this advantage also, that not one sin falls, without the ruin of many others, to which it is nearly related. And to close this advice in one word, young and robust people, that are healthful and vigorous, where there is no danger of sickness, infirmity, or old age, should frequently fast and pray, that they may be strengthened against temptations, that their Spirits being recollected, they may with greater security venture abroad in the midst and hurry of secular incumbrances.

So far have I discours'd against Fleshly Lusts, in their restrain'd signification, as they proceed from wantonness, and lasciviousness. But I see no necessity why we may not understand the *Fleshly Lusts* in this place, in their full extent, as they signifie all those unruly passions, and desires, that act the unregenerate part of Mankind, and drive them for-

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ward upon innumerable Precipices of error, folly and mischief; all of them reduc'd by S. John to three heads, *the lusts of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life.* All those gilded nothings, and hurtful Idols, that Mankind gaze upon with so much dotage and fondness, all of them, whether singly considered, or in the bulk, are contrary to the Nature and Genius of Christianity, inconsistent with true peace and tranquility of mind, and wholly set against the welfare of our Souls. We have a Catalogue of them in the Epistle to the *Galatians*, Chap. 5. v. 19. In which Catalogue, *the Lusts of the Flesh*, strictly so called, are placed in the front, Now the *works of the flesh* are manifest, which are these, *Adultery, Fornication, Uncleanness, Lasciviousness, Idolatry, Witchcraft, Hatred, Variance, Emulations, Wrath, Strife, Seditions, Heresies.* V. 21. *Envyings, Murthers, Drunkenness, Revellings, and such like, of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in times past, that they which do such things, shall not inherit the kingdom of God.*

THE *Apostle* then bids us *abstain from those Lusts*, that are so directly opposit^e in their nature and tendencies to the beauty and just interest of our Souls.

AND this leads me to the second Particular, that I design to speak to, and that is, the *Apostle's* first argument against those *Fleshly Lusts*, taken from their opposition to the Soul. They are drawn up in battel array against the natural life, as well as the mind. And that I may make this apparent in a few words: 'Tis easie to observe, that they war against the Soul, in its purest and highest excellencies; and though they cannot commit a direct rape and violence upon its Spiritual Nature, yet do they combine all their force and strength, to entice and allure it, unto unworthy compliances. And this is so much likely to succeed, in that we are plac'd in the confines of Heaven and Earth. Our Souls hang between the pleasures of the Body, and its own Speculations; and these objects that our Bodies feel, make such impressions upon us by their neighbourhood, that it is with great difficulty,

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that the Soul is victorious over their importunity, and frequent assaults. Now all the prejudice that the Soul can suffer, may be reduc'd to these three Heads.

1. IT may be sullied in its natural perfections and operations.

2. IN its moral endowments and accomplishments.

3. IT may be depriv'd of its supernatural rewards, and carnal Lusts do war against the Soul in all these regards.

1. I SAY, they war against it in its natural perfections and excellencies. Now the true perfection of the Soul, is, to be united unto God. This is its natural element, the contemplation of truth, is its true and proper employment; and if by the enchantment of our Senses, we have forgot our selves, yet, the accusations of our Consciences, the pricking, reproofs and regrets of our mind, amidst the noise, and hurry of external avocations, sufficiently inform us, that our Souls are violated against their original tendency, when they are made to worship the
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Creature instead of the Creator, We were originally design'd to view the Creation, but not to rest upon it, not to dwell in its embraces; but so far to consider it, that by those Ladders we might climb unto the *Author* of our *Being*.

HEAR then the reasonings of our own mind. How have we enslaved them, to those mean and abject drudgeries that are unworthy of their Nature and Original? Now those Spirits that are Sisters to Cherubims and Seraphims, by complying too much with their Senses, are become feeble, flat and unweildy, for their more genuine and spiritual operations. Had we nothing else to do, but to *make provision for the Flesh, and fulfil the Lusts thereof*, we needed not such Souls, as now we are furnished with. Souls that can grasp so many truths together, and lodge them without confusion, or disorder; that search into the Secrets of Nature, and feel pleasures wherein the Body can have no share. Why ought we to have such intellectual furniture, if we had nothing else to do, but to move above the surface of the ground for some few Months, or Years,
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and then lye down in eternal silence, in the cold embraces of the Grave? 'Tis inconsistent with the Goodness and Wisdom of God, to make so noble a Creature, and assign him no higher end, than what may be attain'd with greater advantages, by the Beasts that perish. But those *carnal lusts*, do not only weaken and blunt the edge and vigor of our Spirits, in their natural perfections.

BUT 2. They do fully, darken, and defile them in their moral endowments. See with what solemnity and magnificence the History of our Creation is introduc'd, Gen. 1. *Let us make man in our Image.* 'Twas a design truly becoming the Majesty of God, to repair the breaches made in this Image. We are fallen from our Original Life and Purity, that beauty and light, that adorn'd our Nature, is become almost deformity, and darkness; and so incurable is this bruise and wound, that all the Rules of human *Philosophy*, cannot remove the distemper. *God was manifested in our flesh, that he might heal our Nature, and restore his own Image upon our Souls:* he awakens us to fix our eye on this, as our highest honour,

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honour, to be renewed again to the Image of him that created us. And when he disparages the things that chiefly take up the thoughts of Mankind, and endeavours to remove our mistakes concerning them, he does it by this ponderous motive, *that ye may be like your* Matth. *Father which is in heaven.* To be like God, is the highest beauty, and the most glorious ornament of rational Souls. The Image of God consists in light, power, love, universal benevolence, unconfined Goodness, Charity, Patience, Greatness of Spirit. Now where those Graces are, there heaven is begun, and the Soul is made strong, and impregnated with divine force, *is more than Conqueror, through Jesus Christ that loved us.*

WE have heard the Catalogue of the Works of the Flesh, out of the Epistle to the Galatians; Let us view next the Fruits of the Spirit, that are reckoned, v. 22. *Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance,* Galat. 5. *against such there is no Law.* When we confront the one with the other, the Fruits of the Spirit with the Lusts of the Flesh, there is no doubt to be made, but that

that by the last, our Souls are much sullied and defiled in their moral endowments.

3. *THOSE Fleshly Lusts* rob us of our supernatural rewards, not only by their merit, but by their natural causality: they indispose us for that place and employment, where nothing enters that is impure. Let us then awake, and ask our selves, if no consideration, no argument, be strong enough, or great enough, to startle us out of our sleep and lethargy? Must those Souls of ours that have been made to serve God, and to converse with him in the noblest manner, be suffered to grovel in the dust, to look no higher than the entertainments of Goats, and Swine, and Worms? O! what an indignity is this to our Nature! what a reproach to our Manhood! what a dishonour to the Author of our Being! how disgraceful is it to be accus'd of such follies, (as the most part of Mankind are engaged in) before the Throne of God!

THERE is a second Argument to alienate our affections from *fleshly lusts*; and that is taken from the consideration

tion of our state and condition, *We are Pilgrims and Strangers*: Men cut off by their Religion, from the Earth, whose aims and designs, are for another Kingdom, and a life more pure and immovable, more fixt and serene. We are told by the *Author* to the *Hebrews*, *that here we have no continuing City.*

THAT I may make this a little more clear, let us enquire, in what sense Christians are said to be *Strangers upon Earth*: and Secondly, What improvement we are to make of it.

1. THEY are strangers in their language. It is the most infallible character of a stranger; so the Maid that accus'd S. Peter, she thought, she was very sure he was a *Gallilean*. The Christian breaths in a heavenly air; his heart (and consequently his tongue) is perfum'd with the odors of heaven. S. James exhorts us, Chap. 2. v. 12. *So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the Law of Liberty*: And the same S. James in Chap. 1. v. 26. assures us, *That if any man seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, he deceiveth his own heart,*
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his Religion is vain. And again, He that offendeth not in word, is a perfect Man.

THE faults of the tongue are innumerable, that glibe, slippery, and nimble Member, that is certainly the glory of our Nature, is frequently abus'd to the dishonour of God. S. James, Chap. 3. excellently paints its unruliness and extravagance, v. 6. *And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity, so is the tongue amongst our members, that it setteth the course of nature on fire, and it is set on fire of hell.* We are exhorted by the Apostle, to have our speech seasoned with salt; that we may know how to answer every man, with Christian discretion, modesty and charity, free of all filthiness, error, levity, slander, detraction, or evil surmising. Let us by our tongues discover the language of our Country, of that heavenly Jerusalem that is above, where the tongues of the Inhabitants are wholly taken up in the praises and acknowledgments of the Divine Goodness.

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2. **THEY** are strangers with regard to their Laws, *Matth. 5. v. ult. Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you, pray for them that despitefully use you, bless them that curse you.* Can there be any thing devis'd or thought of, that runs more directly opposite to the Spirit and Genius that prevails in the World? the treachery, rapine, revenge, fraud, and ambition, that fill all places with noise and tumult? They that fight under the Worlds standard, look upon those pure Laws of Christian, innocence, humility and patience, as the Romantic follies of imagination. Their lust, revenge and passion give them Laws; they disdain to stoop to those Laws that are so different from the Statutes of the Kingdom of darkness: and therefore the serious Christian is judg'd a fool by the World, when this undefil'd Religion becomes the rule of his actions. Our Saviour in the forming of his Laws, had an eye to lessen and disparage all those things that the World most admires; present and sharp revenge satisfies the carnal man to the highest degree; and nothing so precious, and gallant in his eyes. But the
Christian

Christian Religion restrains the very first motions towards anger; it stifles those flames, before they break out into malice, passion and revenge. In a word, it was the design of our *Saviour*, to strip the World bare of that painted glory, which it had from our deluded imaginations. He came to rectifie our judgments, and inform us, that *to make us meet partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in light*; we must be rul'd by other Laws, than the Laws and Threatnings of this World. When such as were left of the Race of *David* (relations of our *Saviour*) were brought before *Domitian* the Emperour, because of his Jealousie, lest any of them should aspire to the Crown; they told him plainly, that our *Saviour* was a King, but *his Kingdom was not of this World*; and for themselves, all the possessions they had, was a few Acres, out of which they paid a good Tribute to him, and maintain'd themselves with the rest, through their hard labour, and great temperance. The Laws then, and the designs and aims of this Kingdom, are different from the Laws, the Principles, and the Maxims, by which worldly men are govern'd.

4. We know strangers by their behaviour, by their way of living and conversation. If they differ in their habit, their air, their manner of life, we find

that they are persons of another Climate. This is visible in the Christians, though they live in the World, yet they are not of the World; they are govern'd by the Laws of another Kingdom. We are told by the *Ancients*, that the *Pagans* brought this accusation against the *Christians*, that they differ'd in their Laws, and way of living, from all Nations under Heaven. Thus the *Apostle* exhorts, Phil. 2. 15. *That ye may be blameless, and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke; in the midst of a crooked and perverse Nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the World.* And the *Apostle Peter* exhorts them by their heavenly conversation, to put to silence the ignorance of foolish men. The light and beauty of Christianity, is a constant reproach to the *Atheism* and *Irreligion* of the World; there is so much of true Majesty, and Innocence, to be seen in their behaviour, they wear his Livery in defiance of all opposition, they are known to be of another Kingdom.

5. **THEY** are Pilgrims and Strangers by their motion, flight, and journey from the World; their rest, and habitation is
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not here ; they are on wing to their Country, which is above ; their designs and thoughts are there ; their bials, tendencies and breathings lead thither ; they vilifie all the glory, pomp and magnificence of this vain World ; and the Idols that the most part of Mankind worship, are no more in their esteem, than the toys and rattles of our Childhood. The Children of this World dwell here with pleasure, the thoughts of their removal are grievous and bitter ; but we must have the other World constantly in our view, and by that prospect, order and direct the whole course of our actions. And it is easie to improve this truth to our spiritual advantage. And,

I. Are we strangers upon Earth ; then let us frequently think upon our Country, whilst we are almost frozen here, in the regions of the shadow of death. 'Tis comfortable to look above, where it is a perpetual Sun-shine. This lower Country is overcast with clouds, and vapours, and thick darkness ; round about us we hear nothing but screeches, groans and complaints ; and though we had no

share in those infelicities, yet it is uneasy to any man, that is not utterly void of pity and compassion, to behold the lamentable miseries of others.

OH ! when shall we be above this hurry and noise, this disorder and vexation ? Can there be any Cordial so strong to support us, as the thoughts of those many *Mansions that are in our Fathers house ?*

Psal. 119. v. 34. Let us with the Psalmist, Take his Statutes to be our songs in the house of our pilgrimage.

When we think of our Country above, we sigh, as the Babylonian Captives, upon the banks of Euphrates, and hang our Harps upon the Willows ; since we are not at liberty to sing the Songs of Zion, with that harmony and delight we aim at.

'Tis said of Cain, that he built a City when he went from the presence of God, he meant (as one glosseth it) to fix his residence here. But Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, went from place to place, and dwelt in Tents, and saw the promises afar off, and confessed that they were but Pilgrims and Strangers upon Earth. Wo is me (saith the Psalmist) that I sojourn in Mesech, and

Heb. 11.

Psal. 120. v. 5.

and dwell in the Tents of Kedar. How frequently should we mount aloft in our thoughts and meditations? Such frequent flights from the Earth, would secure us against the flatteries of sensuality; nay, they provoke us to the most vigorous endeavors after the happiness of another life. They teach us to despise this World with all its pageantry and vanity; and with magnanimity to bear all the crosses incident to this state. They quiet our solitudes, and raise our designs, to the most noble and generous undertakings. They fill our hearts with joy and peace, in believing; and amidst all our anxieties and fears, teach us to *possess our Souls in Patience.*

2. IF we are strangers here, we ought to study the dispositions that prepare us for the happiness reserved for us. That Kingdom above is govern'd by other Laws, and the inhabitants of that place are at liberty from their sins, their fetters are knocked off, and they wear Crowns and Diadems, more bright, than that of the mightiest oppressors. 'Tis our business to enquire, how near we are to that blessed temper of love and tranquillity,

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that prevail in the Regions of Light. The general notion of happiness is pleasant to our imaginations, but that life and immortality, which is promis'd in the Gospel, cannot be possess'd, but by such, whose Souls are of a piece with it self.

3. Since we are strangers, we must patiently bear the uneasiness of our present condition. We must with zeal and courage undergo the roughest accidents of this Life. We are not to be caress'd with the delights and pleasures of this World; *we must fight manfully under the Cross of Christ.* We are not to meddle with the affairs of the World with that concern and application of mind, that the Natives do: for we are strangers; and it is the highest impertinence for such to engage too far in other mens business. Let us not be startled too much with the variety of events here below. Let us remain unsolicitous and fixt in our choice: for, the Skreen is shortly to be drawn, and we shall have a full view of those intricate Methods of the Divine Providence, that now perplex our enquiries. We shall have our feet upon Mount
Zion,

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Zion, and from thence look down with joy, that we have so happily escaped the tossings of this tempestuous Sea.

*To God the Father, Son and
Holy Ghost, be all Praise,
Power and Dominion, for
ever. Amen.*

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and the other side of the river
the water is very shallow and the
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S E R M O N

I JOHN, Ch. v. V. 4.

*And this is the victory that overcometh
the World, even our Faith.*

TO prepare my way to the
Text, I need not acquaint
you with the general scope
and design of this Epistle, that
all along breaths the Air of Peace and
Love, a strain of mildness and sweetness,
that appear'd in all the *Apostles*; parti-
cularly in *S. John*, who was allowed a
more familiar converse with our Saviour,
than the rest of the *Disciples*.

FROM

FROM the beginning of this Chapter, we find him describing the force and activity of the Divine Nature, by which we are enliven'd to higher actions than what our Nature produces: for the Divine Nature being the life communicated from, and by God, raises the Soul beyond its natural self, and strengthens us *to do all things through Christ that loved us.*

WE are taught by the Divine Nature immediately to place our highest affections on God, and this love naturally teacheth us obedience to his commands: 'Tis in vain to call him *Lord*, and not to do the things he commands; such is the force of this Divine Love, *it overcomes the World.* This life to which we are begotten by the *Ministry and Incarnation of our Saviour*, is so opposite to the corrupt practices, maxims, and designs, by which this World is govern'd, that it proclaims open war against it: and though *he that is in us* (in the language of *S. John*) *be stronger than he that is in the World*; yet the World stands upon such advantages against us, our in- cumbrances and weaknesses hang so close
to

The Third Sermon.

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to us, we are surrounded on all hands with so many troubles and difficulties in our way to heaven, that before we overcome, we must grapple with our enemies, and bear up with Christian Courage and Magnanimity.

THIS state of Warfare is the Scene of our tryal and preparation, we are Candidates for a Crown of Glory, and it is unreasonable that we should expect it, until first we have given proof of the Greatness and Vivacity of our Souls.

OUR *Saviour* cloath'd himself with Flesh and Blood, that he might teach us, who are lodged in Tabernacles of Flesh, to manage our weapons against our enemies: and this spiritual skill and conduct, is visibly seen in our conquest and triumph over the World, and all its flatteries and engines. This leads me directly to a more particular view of the words that I have read. And by the *World*, I understand nothing else, than that Spirit of Folly and Wickedness, that prevails amongst Mankind. Which our *Saviour* opposes by his Gospel. And here I take three particulars to consideration.

First,

The Third Sermon.

First, The great opposition maintain'd by the World against Christ and his Disciples. Secondly, The possibility of our victory and triumph. Thirdly, The mean by which this is accomplished, even our Faith.

As to the First, That the World doth most despitefully and violently oppose the design and tendencies of Christianity. Our *Saviour* did acquaint his Disciples with it, when he was to leave the World. John 15. 19. *If ye were of the World, the World would love his own, but because ye are not of the World, but I have chosen you out of the World, therefore the World hateth you.*

BUT that I may give you a clear prospect of the opposition between the Spirit of the World, and the Spirit of Christianity, let us First, Consider the Laws and Maxims by which the World is govern'd contrary to the rules of our Saviour. Secondly, The things that the World most admires, loves and preserves. Thirdly, The rewards it offers to its friends and votaries. Fourthly, The manner by which it acts its malice against Christ,

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Christ, and his Disciples: and when we have shortly viewed these particulars, we shall clearly see the fierce opposition against Christ, against the Christian Religion, against the whole Oeconomy of his Kingdom and Laws.

As to the first of these, Are not the Maxims by which the World and its affairs are governed, most opposite to, and different from the Laws of our Saviour? We are told by *him*, that, *the Children of this world are wiser in their own generation, than the children of light*: They are acted by principles of design, subtilty and artifice; the other is acted by a principle of truth, integrity and simplicity: The one is acted by fraud, cunning and avarice; the other by purity, innocence, self-denial, patience and charity.

THE World applauds, and raises on the wings of fame, the man of business, might and dexterity, in managing and canvassing the labyrinths and intrigues of affairs.

BUT

BUT by the Laws of our Religion, we are taught to despise the World, and all its trifling interests and pleasures; and to consider the Wisdom of the World, as the greatest impertinence and folly. By this I do not mean its Political Constitutions, by which its madness is restrained, but I mean its ordinary practices.

WE are invited to other treasures far above the gilded nothings that this World admires. O! how empty is its pageantry, when the varnish drops off, when it appears naked to the eye of Reason and Faith!

SO much the World and the genius of it, teacheth men to value themselves, to despise others, to be revengeful, to climb as high as is possible; they endeavour to attract the eyes and admiration of all men, to satisfy their passion to the full, to gather together all the treasures of Nature, and dwell securely in its embraces. But the Christian Religion teacheth us to see the vanity of all those contrivances, the folly of their passions,

passions, the emptiness of their satisfaction.

WE are taught by it, to go to Heaven, through the tempests and storms of this World with a low Sail; to prefer others to our selves, to be patient under reproofs, to be humble in the highest of our prosperity, to be denyed to the flatteries of Sense; to be unconcerned and unsolicitous for future events, casting our selves with the whole weight of our faith and hope, upon the care, wisdom and love of God. We are taught by it, to cut off our right hands, and pull out our right eyes, to bless them that curse us, and to do good to them that despitefully use us: In a word, it ranverses and overturns the whole fabrick of the Worlds Politicks, it runs cross to all its corrupt designs, and to the end we may become wise unto salvation; we must be esteemed fools in the account of the World: and therefore our Saviour frequently told his Disciples, that *His Kingdom was not of this world*, that it was govern'd by, and established upon other Laws and Constitutions. Now when we but shortly reflect upon the different

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different Laws and Constitutions, we see clearly the opposition betwixt Christ and the World, the one earthly, the other heavenly.

Secondly, THIS opposition appears, if we will consider the things that the World most admires, loves and preserves. We are exhorted by *S. John*, 1 Ep. ch. 2. v. 15. *Love not the world, nor the things that are in the world, for all that is in the world, the Lust of the Eyes, the Lust of the Flesh, and the Pride of Life.*

THE Lust of the Eyes, tempts our Covetousness: the *Lusts of the Flesh*, set on fire those appetites that deserve that name in the strictest notion of the phrase. The *Pride of Life*, are honors, preferments and glories, that men pursue with so much concern and eagerness. But,

How poor and despicable are these things to the enlightned eye of a Christian, that sees by the eye of Faith? How thin are they! how unworthy of our choice! how disproportionate to the Soul

Soul of Man! how seculent and paulty are the pleasures of Sense, attended with so much toil in the purchase, vanity in their enjoyment, uncertainty in their continuance! And if the World had nothing else to make it vain beyond all expression, but this one thing, that those who have admired it most, and sought those satisfactions from it, have been forced at length to acknowledge, that there was nothing in it, but vexation of Spirit. This, I say, might convince us, that the things the World most admires, are very unsuitable to the Soul of Man.

BUT instead of such things, the Christian Religion offers to our view and choice, the pure and masculine pleasures of Devotion, the favour of God, the peace and tranquillity of our Consciences, the victory and dominion over our lusts and passions, and those riches that are at Gods right hand in the Heavens.

The chaste and solid satisfaction of having overcome our vices, brings more true honour, than the achievements that

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are

Fortior est are proclaimed by the loudest fame:
qui se, 'Tis more glorious to overcome evil ha-
quam qui bits, and inveterate diseases of the mind,
fortissima than to surprize, or take by open force a
vincit City.
Mania. -

IN a word, let us but remember what are the conquests, glories, and triumphs, that are exposed to our view by the Christian Religion, and we shall find that they move in a far higher Sphere, than the little things that take up the time, talk, business and thoughts of worldly men.

THE *voluptuous Man* sacrifices his Soul to the appetites of the flesh, as if it had been given him to make provision for the lust thereof. The *rich Miser* pierces himself through with so many cares and fears, lest his Angels should take wings to themselves and fly. The *Ambitious* is filled with a *Phantom* of honour, which he hath painted in his own fancy, that he forgets his sleep, and all things else, to place himself where he would be.

BUT

BUT the Christian Religion teacheth us, not only to neglect, but despise such fantastick apparitions, such dreams, such nothings, that the blind World adores with so much pageantry and folly. We are taught by it, to recollect our selves from this hurry and madness, to strip those things naked of their borrowed lustre, to pierce into their very essence, and feel that we are not made for such mean things, as human fancy and opinion; hath magnified beyond their true size, when we come up close to them, and consider them, then their paint falls off, and we must acknowledge that we were fools to the greatest degree.

So intangled are the Labyrinths of the World, which made *Augustus Cesar*, with so frequently for his retreat, and ended many of his Discourses to the Senate, with the pleasant hope of his retirement, that now bore up his Spirit under the load of so many affairs. He had so many Armies at his command, the *Roman* Empire to maintain them, he enjoyed the applause of the Wisest Senate;

yet how did he sigh after the advantages of enjoying himself.

WE are in the truest sense the offspring of God, why then should our affections be mean? Why should we so much admire what is despicable? for *the world passeth away, and the fashion thereof*: but our Spirits and thoughts run parallel with eternity; nothing less can satisfy the immortal Spirit of Man.

THEREFORE are we exhorted so frequently in the New Testament, to *place our affections on things above, and not on the things of the Earth*; to remember, *that here we have no continuing City*; that here we are Pilgrims and Strangers; that, *when this tabernacle is broken down, we have a house with God, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens*. These, and such treasures, are the things that we are taught to admire, by our Religion: these are the things we are commanded to pursue, since we are Heirs and Co-heirs with Christ.

HE holds forth to us a Crown of immortal happiness, that the sight of it might

might provoke us to the most heroick efforts of virtue, piety, self-denial, mortification, patience and humility. Now it is most evident, that the World, and the Spirit of Christianity, pursue and admire things of a different nature. But this opposition will more fully appear, if we consider,

Thirdly, **THE** rewards by which the World allures to its friendship, and those proposed by our Saviour; what do men expect from the World, when they have sold themselves to serve it, when they have sacrificed their time and strength to court its honours, and follow its genius? Such as have prostituted their very Souls to comply with its folly and wickedness, how miserable is their gain, or rather how infinite is their loss: how emphatick is the Interrogation of our Saviour, *What hath a man gained, when he hath lost his own Soul?* We find the World cannot relieve a Man, when he hath most need of help and consolation,

LET him but put the friendship of the World to the Test, when he groans under the terror of Conscience, or when

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his Soul is ready to leave his body; and then let him sincerely declare, what weak and brittle reeds these things are, that he most admired; to support him against his own fears.

WERE we so wise, as in our fancy to go down into the Grave before we are carried thither, to converse with the dead that are gone before us, to live a while under ground, to wrap our selves in our Winding sheets, and then from that place of silence and darkness, to view the things that keep the Men of the World so much in agitation.

WOULD not we be astonished to see Men made after the Image of God, so much enslaved to those Idols of fancy, to those shadows that vanish so quickly, to such trifles that are the object of childish appetites. Did we but call to mind the present regrets and tortures of the damned? Were we allowed to see *Dives* turned down from his sumptuous Table, his stately Palace, his numerous attendants, and fine linnen, into the scorching flames of Hell? And on the other side, could we see the Martyrs, that

that have gone through the flames of persecutions and disasters, now seated above malice and misery, in the Regions of peace and love? Might we from thence clearly see the irreconcilable opposition between Christ and the World in their rewards.

But *Fourthly*, THIS appears in the manner by which the World acts its malice against Christ and his Disciples. (1.) It acts this malice by slander and calumny: Our Saviour told his Disciples, that *reproach and infamy must needs be their patrimony, if they zealously adhered to the doctrine and discipline of the Cross*: nay, 'tis made so essential to Christianity, that *to be reproached for the name of Jesus*, makes up one of its great Beatitudes; *Blessed are you* Mat. 5. 11. *when all men speak all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake.* He tells them plainly in another place, *that they ought not to be discouraged with the calumnies and reproaches of the world: for if they call the Master of the house Beelzebub, the disciples should not think themselves above their Master.*

THERE is nothing in human Nature more tender and delicate, than the sense of honour: God hath planted it in our Nature, to be a spur to virtuous and great achievements. The first Christians did sacrifice even this to the love of Jesus: So S. Paul tells us, *that the Apostles were made the off-scouring of all things*: and our Saviour intimates in S. Matthew, *that it was impossible for Christ and his doctrine to appear, but he must needs meet with slanders, libels and reproaches.*

John the Baptist came neither eating nor drinking, and yet he is said to have a Devil. Our Saviour came eating and drinking, went to their feasts and entertainments, to teach them that are engaged in such meetings, the highest innocence and purity, yet he is represented a friend of publicans and sinners.

THEE Spirit of the World is so perverse and humourfom, that it finds faults with the Christians at every turn, for every thing that affronts their wickedness.

WE

WE are to persist as *S. Peter* exhorts, *in well doing, and by it to put to silence the ignorance of foolish men.* Let us live like the Disciples of *Jesus*, leaving our reputation, and what else is dear to us, to his disposal: for we shall one day be vindicated from the foolish and impertinent censures of Men, in the view of Angels, and Companies of just Men made perfect. The hope of this bore up the Spirit of *S. Paul*, as an invincible Rock against the most violent storms. Rom. 8. 33, 34. *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods elect, it is Christ that dyed, yea rather that is risen again from the dead,*

Secondly, THE World manifests its hatred, by violent persecutions of the persons and interests of the Christians. Did not the whole World arm it self with rage and indignation against the light of the Gospel, when it began first to shine; and the Noble Army of Martyrs forced their way to Heaven, by patience and invincible magnanimity. How undaunted and fearless did they stand out against the powers of darkness, even when they appeared above ground, in their blackest
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and most terrible dress. They withstood their fury like so many Walls of Brass, *resisting unto blood, and striving against Sin.* How inveterate is the malice of the *Serpent*, against the *seed of the Woman*? The Spirit of Persecution smoaks from the bottomless pit: and our Saviour told his Disciples no less than *that they were to be driven from their Synagogues; that they were to be brought before Judges; that they should be hated of all men for his sake.* And this is not so peculiar to the first Ages of Christianity, but that all good men have their share of it in all Ages. For S. Paul tells us, *that they must suffer persecution.* But this is not the only way that the World discovers its opposition to Christianity. But,

Thirdly, BY its Tentations, by its soft & sly insinuations, by which frequently it trips up the heels of the greatest Saints; it lays snares for us in every circumstance of our life: what it cannot do by open force, it ventures to compass by subtilty and artifice. The World is one great Trap, and how great a Miracle is it, that we should escape the flatteries and allurements of it? Since its most plausible offers

offers beat constantly upon our Senses, and we lye open to all its assaults on all quarters; we are so near a kin to the Earth, that it makes easily impressions on us: unless we are assured of the victory, how could we encounter so formidable an enemy, such Armies of Temptations on the right and left hand.

WE had need to listen to the Apostles exhortation, *Let him that standeth, take heed lest he fall.* Our ground is so slippery, our weakneses so many, our strength so small, our enemies so active and malicious, and the insinuations of Sense so deceitful. From what is said, we shall clearly see the opposition between the World, and the Spirit of Christianity; and therefore let us shortly improve this Meditation for our practice.

First, **ARE** they so opposite one to the other: then let us not love the world, Rom. 12. 2. *Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed in the Spirit of your mind.* Let us not be moulded into the frame and fashion of this World; but let us remember, we have a more heavenly calling, higher nature, a more

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more Seraphick Discipline ; in a word, we are to steer our course against the tyde, and current of the wicked practices of this World ; for even in this sense the *kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.*

Secondly, *ARE* they so opposite the one to the other ? Let us remember, that *no man can serve two Masters ; you cannot serve God and Mammon* : If you are the servants of Christ, you must renounce the World ; for it is a part of our Baptismal Engagement to do so ; *Where the heart is, there the treasure is also* : If it be glued to the World, you must bid farewell to that inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, eternal in the heavens.

Thirdly, *Is* the World so opposite to the designs of our Religion ? Let us fly beyond it in our thoughts and meditations : Let us frequently steal out of the noise and hurry of its incumbrances and confusions, and dwell in those Regions, where there is nothing but peace and harmony, where the Celestial Choirs tune their Harps, and run divisions in the joyful Praises of their Maker :

and

and to be sure nothing hath a greater tendency to make us victorious over the World, than the frequent flights from its noise and cares.

And this leads me to the Second Particular that I design to speak to, which is, That the Saints shall certainly overcome the World, notwithstanding of its bitterness and oppositions against them; and this I will make good, if we consider, (1.) The Promise of God for our conduct and direction. (2.) The Victory and Triumph of Jesus Christ, as our Head and Mediator. (3.) The Strength and Energy of the Divine Nature.

(1.) THE Promise of God for our Conduct and Assistance. He hath said, *I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.* We Heb. may say of this Conflict with the World, as the Royal Psalmist said of his frequent Combats with his enemies, *'tis he that teacheth my fingers to fight;* and without doubt the Divine Wisdom is apparent in our Conquest over the World; else how could poor Creatures (all made up of error, darkness and precipitance) venture

cure on Tentations of all sorts without his special Conduct and Presence? How quietly doth the Psalmist rejoyce in the Meditation of his fatherly Care and Assistance. *He maketh me to lye down in green pastures, he leadeth me beside the quiet waters, he restoreth my Soul, he guideth me in the paths of righteousness for his names sake, thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. 'Tis through God alone we shall do valiantly.*

The weapons of our warfare are mighty through him; he not only treads Satan under our feet, but the World also, which is the Devils great Confederate against the Saints.

(2.) We are assured of the Victory, through the Triumph and Victory of Jesus Christ. He hath bidden us himself *be of good cheer, for he hath overcome the World. He is the Lyon of the Tribe of Judah; he marcheth upon the Head of his Disciples with displayed Banners against the Legions of Darkness; the World, Hell and the Grave, are hauled at the Wheels of his triumphant Chariot. Therefore the Author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, bids us consider*

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the cloud of witnesses, but most of all Jesus Christ himself the Author and Finisher of our Faith. When we are like to faint, when our fears grow thick and dark, then consider the Captain of our Salvation, who hath already broke the force of our enemies, and is set down on the right hand of the Throne of God; and there employes his Power in Heaven and Earth, for the conduct, safety and success of his followers. Let us believe with the Apostle S. Paul, that we shall be able to do all things through Christ that strengthens us.

(3.) WE are assured of the Victory, by the Strength and Energy of the Divine Nature. So we are told in the Text, that, *that which is born of God, overcometh the World*: and in Chap. 4. *He that is in us, is stronger than he that is in the World*. If we were to grapple with the World by equal strength, we could not promise to our selves the Victory, but we are partakers of the Divine Nature, we are carried above our selves. God is in us in a truer and higher sense, than the Poet meant: it.

*Est Deus
in nobis
agitante
calefscimus
illo.*

THE

THE Divine Nature is full of Life and Power, it grows unto perfection, *unto the stature of a perfect Man in Christ Jesus*, until it lodge us at last in the bosom of God. 'Tis a Coal from the Altar that inflames the Soul, and consumes the Body of Death to nothing. What is not the Christian Religion able to do in conjunction with Omnipotence?

THIS is it that wrought such incredible Changes in the World, and if others have been so successful and victorious in their Conflicts with the World, why ought we to despair? Had not the Luminaries of the Church, the same flesh to mortifie? the same passions to overcome? the same World to contend with? and if they overcame the World, why may not we be victorious also?

BUT let us improve this Meditation for our practice. If we are thus assured of the Victory, if we do not wilfully desert our Stations, then let us not be discouraged with the Terrors of the World; nor with those imaginary difficulties, by which Men frequently fright
them.

themselves from their duty. But in the midst of our fears and objections, let us strengthen our selves in God, and debate the matter with our own Consciences in the Language of the Psalmist; *Why art thou cast down, O my Soul! hope in God: remember, and call to mind the Victory that Men of like Passions have attained, why do you thus sit down hanging your head, as if the World were invincible?* Psalm 36.

WHY do we suffer our selves so tamely to be carried down the Stream? Let us bear up against it, and remember that we have to do with a broken and conquered Enemy; and if we do not shamefully yield, God will stand by us, at our right hand, and make Us more than Conquerors, through Jesus Christ. It is unbecoming the Goodness of God to leave us, when we are engaged with such formidable Enemies. *If he be for Us, who can be against Us?*

Here we are but Pilgrims and Strangers, and since we have renounced the World so solemnly, why do we look back upon it, with so much fondness and delight? why are we diffident of the Victory? For the Captain of our Salvation

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looks

looks on, and suffers us to be surrounded with Tentrations, that he may make proof of our Courage, Constancy, Fidelity, Loyalty and Patience: God looks on the Conflicts of his people with delight; and by their tryals and hard encounters, he fortifies their Souls for Immortality, which is the prize.

Maxim.
Tyr.

IT was the glimmering of this Meditation, made so many of the antient Philosophers think, that a Man without suffering, was without reputation: for honour, by the esteem and vote of all Mankind, belongs to them that have suffered, and striven resolutely in the midst of all disasters against Vice and its insinuations. To this purpose Seneca in his Book *de Providentia*, says, *That a Man bearing up resolutely against disadvantages and disasters, was a spectacle worthy Jupiter himself to look on.*

SINCE then we are furnished with better Principles, and a clearer Light, let us under the Conduct of our *High Priest*, face all Tentrations, and keep our consciences void of offence towards God, and towards Men; for the things that are terrible

rible to Mans eyes, are but Scare Crows and Apparitions to the eyes of Faith.

AND this leads me to the third and last Particular, that is, The Mean by which this Victory is obtained, the Apostle saith, *Faith is our Victory*.

THE Figure is obvious enough; this is the Mean and Weapon. by which we trample under foot the World, and all its glittering vanities, and soar above it. We are by our Laws Citizens of another Kingdom; we are neither intangled with its snares, nor blinded with its foolish hopes, nor govern'd by its pernicious Maxims, nor dazled with its false lights; while we keep our eyes open to the light of Faith, and the Glories that our *Jesus* hath manifested to us in the Gospel, then we grow too big for this World, and the sight of that Inheritance, enlarges our Souls, and the Earth becomes contemptible in our eyes.

BUT that I may make this the more clear, I shall endeavour to give light unto it, by the Nature and Excellency of Faith it self, which when we have con-

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sidered, this Conquest will appear to be the most necessary result of Faith.

AND (1.) Consider, that by Faith we are furnished with new Principles, we have a Spirit giv'n us stronger than the World, opposite to it, far above it; this is frequently asserted by S. John in the same Epistle, *That which is born of God, overcometh the World.* The Soul once touched with the Spirit and Love of God, becomes nimble and active in his service, and able to break through the blackest Clouds of opposition: what is it can damp the Soul once fired with the Love of God? Did not the Courage of the first Christians amaze the Heathen World, when they saw them part with every thing for Immortality?

BUT when we call to mind, that the Divine Nature is the Seed of God, we must remember, that this Seed must grow up to perfection, that it cannot be choaked nor oppressed.

IT is by Faith, that we are made the Sons of God; and the ancient Poets seem to have a Notion of this, when they

they made their *Heroes*, and such as were famous for difficult enterprizes, the offspring of the Gods; the fancy may be thus far allowed, *That every good gift and perfect donation is from above*: and whatever is great and generous is brought to perfection in the strength of God. Christianity makes a thorough Change in the Souls of Men, we are partakers of such a Nature, as looses us from the fetters of our former prejudices and errors, and makes us run contrary to our most hereditary and prevailing lusts; this Change is a mighty Argument for the Divinity of our Religion.

ORIGEN against CELSUS glories in this Argument, That by the Doctrine of Faith, the fierce and barbarous *Scythians* became mild, peaceable and calm. That the soft and delicate *Persians*, became chaste, sober and religious. That the Proud and Imperious *Romans*, made their *Eagles* sit down under the *Cross* of *Christ*. That the *Grecians*, famous for their *Eloquence* and *Philosophy*, despis'd all their *Curiosities*, and embraced the humble Doctrine of the *crucified Jesus*. This Change had been impossible, unless it

had been begun, and advanced by the Infinite Power of God.

SUCH is the Strength of Faith that so powerfully disarms us of our Lusts and Passions, and makes us vye with the Angels themselves in the swiftness and alacrity of our obedience: by this it is we snap assunder the Cords and Bands that held us fast in the Embraces of the World.

But (2.) BY Faith we are not only endued with the Divine Nature, but also we have the true Notions of God and of our selves; the strength of the World did much consist in our ignorance. One great reason why the *Heathen World* was sunk in folly & wickedness, was this, they had lost the true knowledge of God; and the Fables of the *Poets* were the System of their Divinity; and those *Poets* did represent their *Deities* as Actors of all the Follies and Villanies that Human Nature is capable of; then there was no proper restraint in their Religion, to divert them from Vice, since the very *Gods* they adored, loved and practis'd it: Might not they infer reasonably,

bly, that the greatest sinners might dwell with those Gods; and that there was not such distance and hatred, betwixt Sin and the Divine Nature.

BUT our Religion teacheth us, *that he is of purer eyes, than that he can behold iniquity; that nothing unclean shall enter the New Jerusalem; that without holiness, it is impossible to see God; that the pure in heart are only capable of that Vision; that holiness is not only our duty, but a main ingredient of our happiness.* Heb. 12.
14.
Mat. 5. 8.

THAT which I design by this, is, That we could not overcome the World, unless we had clear Notions of the Divinity; and therefore we are frequently told, that the only begotten Son did reveal the Father unto us; and the illuminations of the Prophets themselves came from him who is the Eternal $\lambda\omicron\gamma\textcircled{C}$. *that enlighteneth every man that cometh into the World.*

THE Gospel manifests the eternal distance betwixt God and Sin; he is Life, Power and Wisdom, Greatness and Om-

Phil.

niscience; and Sin in its very nature, is darkness, misery, confusion and imperfection; then our Faith teacheth us to reason against the World, from the Divine Nature, as well as from the Divine Authority; and having by it got a clear prospect of God, our selves, and the immortality of our Souls; what is it that the World can offer to our choice, but what we despise in our esteem?

(3.) FAITH gives us a perfect account of the vanity of the World, its emptiness and weakness; it teaches us to come near it, and feel it. You see the things that the World most admires, have not their value from their own intrinsic worth and solidity, but from the fancy and opinion of men. Is it not then sad, that we should be so easily deceived with shadows and images of happiness? Those Nations that have great store of Silver and Gold, admire our Glasses and Toyes, more than their own Treasures. It is not real worth, but fancy, that makes us idolize the World.

BUT as I have hinted before, how useless is the World to a Man that begins to feel the weight of Gods indignation,

nation, and the flames of his Wrath already kindled in his Conscience: Let the Man thus tortured, consult the skilful Physicians; let him call about him his great and potent friends, his numerous and splendid family, his servants and attendants, and wishal suppose him in the esteem and love of all his acquaintances, and let the World smile on him with all its flatteries and caresses, yet nothing can give him the least ease.

His groans under the smart of his invisible wounds, his Soul is inflamed with bitter reflections, and all the art and skill of the Apothecary cannot give him one quiet and calm thought: how thin and coarse are all the Medicaments that the World offers us, when we most need relief! how powerful are the enchantments of the World, that we should lean upon it, when our Faith hath discovered unto us, how vain a thing it is? What can it do at the hour of death, when we go to a Country where all its friendship is rejected? In our greatest stresses we ordinarily fly to those strong-holds, that we judge the securest places, now a man cannot be in harder

harder Circumstances, than when he is
 tossed between time and eternity, ready
 to take his flight into another World;
 how vain doth the World then appear to
 him, when his Conscience begins to
 waken, and its accusations can no longer
 be shifted. This I think sufficiently
 proves the Vanity of the World, and the
 knowledge of this we have by Faith,
 and therefore *Faith is our victory by which*
we overcome the World.

But (4.) WE overcome the World
 by Faith, because it gives a fair prospect
 of another Kingdom. and it is this that
 lifts our affections above this present
 World; we begin to despise all its of-
 fers, when we know we are heirs of God,
 and co-heirs with Christ Jesus. If we
 were surpriz'd with being chosen into
 the Roman Empire, how little would we
 value our former designs and projects?
 The Christians look down upon the
 World, with a heavenly Magnanimity,
 as a thing below them; for they fix
 their habitation above the Clouds, where
 no Vapour can ascend to disturb the
 Air.

THE Contemplations of God, and of that Pure and Angelical Life, makes us quite leave the body, and fasten our eyes on that Celestial Inheritance, where the Stars of Light mutually glance Light to one another, and are all of them enlightened and warmed by that Original Light, *that dwells himself in light inaccessible.*

So S. Paul tells the *Corinthians*, 2 Ep. c. 4. v. 5. *While we look not at the things that are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things that are seen, are temporary, but the things that are not seen, are eternal.* To this purpose the 11th of the *Hebrews* is spent, *Abraham saw the Promise afar off, the Patriarchs confessed themselves Pilgrims and Strangers on the Earth.* S. Stephen saw the *heavens opened*; how little did he value the Mutinies and Cruelties of his Country-men? Acts.

MOSES (Heb. 11. 24.) *despised the Court of Pharaoh, and the pleasures of sin for a season, because he had an eye to the recompence of reward.* There was nothing charming

charming or desirable, in all the glory of *Egypt*, when he saw the invisible Crown of Glory: How could one bred in the *Court of Pharaoh*, and in all the Wisdom of the *Egyptians*, amidst the pleasures and diversions of the *Court*, refuse the Government and Sovereignty of so vast an Empire? The World could not see into the reason of it; they could not but conclude him a fool by their Maxims: but Faith gave him a view of a Kingdom, above the most radiant Diadems, and the brightest Thrones on Earth, and a Victory more noble, than the Conquest of so many Provinces. O the greatness and divine force of those mighty Souls, whose appetites and desires are enlarged by Faith! The World cannot fill their thoughts; and therefore they by Faith overcame it, and all its terrors and flatteries, as the *Martyrs* mention'd in the Book of the *Maccabees*, waiting for a better resurrection.

SEE into what an holy Agony *S. Paul* did put himself, when the heavenly Crown was in his view. Phil. 3. v. 14. *I press toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus: I*
see

see the Crowns which are prepared for the victorious, for the unwearied and resolute Disciples of the *Cross*: when I bend my Soul to its full force and activity, to lay hold on eternal life; such a fight cannot but overcome the World; and such a fight is only had by Faith.

BUT for improvement of all these thoughts, Let us remember, that the World can never be to us a quiet habitation, since the opposition between it & our Religion, is endless and incurable: when we have overcome one difficulty, we must look for another: here we are like the *Israelites* in the Wilderness, tossed from one hardship to another: though the World should promise us fair, yet its promises are deceitful, and its friendship is a violation of our obedience to our *Saviour*.

LET us therefore gird our loins, and watch against its subtilties and snares, as they that wait for the return of their Master: if we intermit but for a little while, we lose more ground, than we are able to recover for many days. Let us not therefore be slothful and negligent,
left

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lest our Master should surprize us, and we be found unprepared to make our accounts: Let the World feel that we are Christians; and consequently, not only taught to despise it, but enabled to overcome it; that when we leave it, we may come off the Field with the applause of our Master, and so with joy and confidence, we may give up our Souls to his hands, as unto the hands of our most faithful *Creator*.

*To God the Father, Son, and
Holy Ghost, be all Power,
Praise and Dominion,
World without end.
Amen.*

A
S E R M O N

O N
P H I L I P . i i i . 14

*I press toward the Mark, for the prize
of the high calling of God in Christ
Jesus.*

IT is usual with most Hearers, when the Text is plain, when there is nothing in it to invite their Curiosity, nothing beyond the common and great Truths of Christianity; then, to unbend their attention. As if the substantial Truths of our Religion, that in their Nature, Scope and Tendency, are design'd to beget, preserve and maintain, the life, vigor and devotion of our Souls, were

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were only to be preach'd to the *Pagans* and *Infidels*. But this Disease of the Mind, is as dangerous, as common: therefore my design from these words, is to leave upon your Memories a common Truth, acknowledg'd by all, and considered and digested by very few.

AND as the Truth contain'd under these words, is obvious and plain; so are all the Allusions and Metaphors, under which it is deliver'd, very familiar and easie. Those publick Games of *Greece*, mention'd almost by all Authors, do naturally represent the fervour, activity and zeal of *Christian Life*, frequently compar'd in the Scriptures to a *Race*. And therefore all *Interpreters* do agree, that these Verses are Agonistical, and that they carry in them an immediate relation to those Games; in which, publick applause, generosity, courage and emulation, prompted the Competitors, to the most accurate care, caution and activity.

WHEN we remember what an Age we live in, how far *Atheism*, *Lukewarmness* and *Stupidity* hath eaten out the vigour

vigour and zeal of Primitive Devotion ; should we not cast back our eyes on those glorious Combatants of the first Age, whose examples are able , even at this distance, to put some Life and Spirit unto us.

THIS being the design, and the Text being plain (without changing the natural Position of the Words), three things offer themselves to our consideration : 1. The vigour, strength and activity of the Apostles motion. 2. The straight and unbyas'd Line in which he moved. 3. The end, scope and prize he had in his view ; and that is , *the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus*. In one word, the Reward of Christianity. Of these in order ;

1. GOD is to be serv'd now under the New Testament, with a holy awe, fear, care and diligence. Though this be acknowledged by all , yet how few are there , that digest the Principles upon which it is founded , and by which it may be rivetted into their Souls.

I . I SHALL

I SHALL endeavour then to provoke you to this extraordinary Care, by such Arguments, as do equally enforce it; and chastise the Lukewarmness and Carelessness, Inconsideration and detestable Neutrality of the present Age. And this will appear necessary, if we consider,

1. Either the Nature of God.
2. The Spirituality and extent of his Law.
3. The Vivacity and Strength of our own Souls.
- Or, 4. The Practice of the best of Men.
5. The Opposition that we meet with in our Christian Course.
6. The Miscarriages of the former part of our Life.
7. The peculiar Obligations of Christianity; viz. that we are *bought by the blood of Jesus.*
8. Consider the miserable Toil and Slavery of a Life of Sin.

And then we cannot but acknowledge, that hitherto we have little considered our Christianity.

i. I SAY, Let us consider the Nature of that God whom we serve.

NOTHING purifies and enlarges the Mind more, than the true account of the Divine Nature. And therefore our

our *Saviour* when he came to accomplish the great Reformation, did in the first place establish the true Notion of Almighty God, and reveal the Father unto us. No wonder then, if the Heathen World was miserably sunk and buried in their Lusts and Impieties; when the very History of their Gods, and the Fables of their *Poets*, did represent them under the Tyranny of their Passion, Lust, Jealousie, Rapine and Revenge, acting all the Extravagancies that make our Nature miserable and infamous. How could they think it but honourable, to be like their Gods? could they be induc'd to reform what was heroically virtuous.

BUT blessed be God, we have no such subterfuge and pretence for our wickedness. God hath manifested himself clearly unto us; we have such Notions of the Deity, as are adequate to the Reason and Spirituality of our Souls fix'd in the Gospel.

THE Holy Scriptures every where represent him as the first Original and Self sufficient *Being*, at an eternal distance from all weakness, mixture,

change or composition ; the only Center of all Life, Power, Goodness and Omniscience.

Will you consider his Power. See how elegantly the Prophet *Isaiah* confutes, from his Power, the folly of Idolatry. *The Nations are as a drop of a bucket, they are counted as the small dust of the ballance : He taketh up the Isles as a very little thing ; all Nations are as nothing, and they are less than nothing* Isa. 40. 13. *and vanity.* v. 22. *It is he that sitteth on the circle of the Earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers ; he stretches out the heavens as a Curtain, and spreads them out as a Tent to dwell in.*

THE Armies of Heaven wait his call ; the brightest Seraphims stand ready to fly his errands up and down the v. 18. Creation ; to whom then will ye liken God, what likeness will ye compare him to. When we think of his Power, the very first thoughts of it should allay the pride and swellings of Vanity. How soon were the passionate complaints of *Job* run down with the mention of his ineffable Power, and his heart struck with Silence and Reverence ? I F

IF you consider his Wisdom. *O Lord, Ps. 104. 4. how manifold are thy works? In wisdom hast thou made them all; the Earth is full of thy Riches. The Lord of Hosts is Isa. 28. 29. wonderful in Council, and excellent in working. Great in Council, and mighty in Jer. 39. 19. works, who from the darkeſt Labyrinths and Intricacies of Providence, makes the event beautiful and comely.*

IF you consider his Goodneſs, *it endures for ever: He is the Center and the Fountain of it. If his Juſtice, it is inviolable, The Scepter of his Kingdom is a Scepter of Righteouſneſs. If his Holineſs, He is of purer eyes, than to behold iniquity. If his Knowledge and Omniſcience, He is light it ſelf; and dwells in light inaccessible, and with him is no darkneſs at all.*

LET us then but a little more ſeriouſly reflect upon the Nature of God, and warm our Soul at this fire. Let us ask, Is this God, whoſe Majeſty fills the Heavens and the Earth, to be indeed approach'd with flat and tepid Devotions? Did the Heathens worſhip their Idols

with so much Lukewarmness as is too too visible among the Christians? Nay, but their sacrifices, prostrations, vain repetitions, their superstitious Pageantry and Ceremonies requir'd a great deal of attention and application.

The very Devils if they were worshipped, would not be satisfied with the careless behaviour of the Christians in our days; and shall we approach the Invisible Immortal God, with less regard, than the Pagans did their dumb idols? *Our God is a Spirit* (saith our Saviour) *and must be worshipped in Spirit and in Truth.* And if you would allow me to speak a little more plainly, nothing casts greater contempt upon the God that we adore, or the Religion that we espouse, than the manner of our Worship. When we approach our Patrons and Benefactors on Earth, we meet their smiles with the lowest submissions, and acknowledgements. But when we come unto the Altar, we offer the *blind and the lame* in the language of the Prophet, *Offer it now unto thy Governour*, saith the Prophet. The Living God must be worshipped with life, and serv'd with vigour, and ador'd with

Mal. i. 8.

with devotion. He is all Perfection, and cannot be serv'd with the cold and faint essays, of half conviction, and lame consideration. I ask then, when we dwell on the Nature of God, whether or no the whole Soul ought to be employed in his Worship and Service.

BUT had we to do with such a Deity as the *Epicureans* fancied, one that had eternally locked up himself within the Imperial Heavens: If our actions and affairs came not at all under his cognizance, then we might approach him with that remissness, coldness and unconcernedness, that is visible in our addresses. But our God is all pure Life, intent upon the Government of the World; *all things are open and naked before him, with whom we have to do.* His eyes pierce into the Secrets that are buried in darkness. *He look'd down to see* Psal. 139. *if any did seek after God. He humbles himself to behold the things that are done in Heaven and in Earth.* There passes nothing unobserved; *Whether shall I fly from his presence? If we ascend into the Heavens, he is there in his Majesty and Power,* and his glorious Troops attend

Ephes. his pleasure. *He worketh all things after the Council of his own Will. Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did he both in heaven and in earth, in the sea, and in all deep places.* The most casual and apparently fortuitous actions are ordered by his Wisdom. Nothing so little, but it falls under his care: He is not a little Prince, confin'd to the Hills and Mountains, as the *Aramites* profanely imagin'd; but *the valleys also are his.* *The young Lions* roar, and seek their meat from God, *the Lillies of the field* are adorned; *not a Sparrow* falls to the ground without your Father; *your very hairs* are all numbered. But,

2, LET me press this from the Nature of his Law; the sum whereof obliges us to love the Lord our God, with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our strength, and our neighbour as our selves. The Laws of Men restrain our hands, and determine our outward motions: but the Laws of God set bounds to our very thoughts. He that gave Man understanding, sees the very first risings of our inventions; and there is nothing appears irregular without, but what
what

what was formed within: *for out of the heart proceed murders, adulteries, &c.* Matth.
And therefore the Divine Law reaches the inside, as well as the outside; it makes a very exact Anatomy of the whole Soul, and opens up our hearts unto our selves, and discovers what we knew not before, and yet now we know to be exactly true. The most intricate cases are comprehended under its rules and directions; if the grosser acts of impiety and wickedness were only forbidden, and our Souls were left at liberty to entertain mischievous designs within, then we should want the most effectual mean to heal the distemper of our Nature. But he that perfectly knows what is in Man, the whole frame of his Soul, the contrivance, first risings, manifold circumstances and design of all his actions, hath encircled him with such a perfect Law; *a Law that divides between the Soul and the Spirit, and is a discernor of the thoughts of the heart.*

THIS Rule is so exact and authoritative, that it reaches all the windings, and the turnings of the Soul; the most artificial excuses cannot hide our inventions

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tions from that piercing Light that shines in it ; it enters into the closest retirements, and sees into the secret imaginations. Its authority fits so close to the mind of Man , that it can no more shake its force , than divest it self of its own Nature.

AND this effectually proveth a Supreme Dominion of our Law-giver, this invisible Authority of him who sees our hearts, and hath armed our Consciences with light and power sufficient to accuse us, and to chastise us with its sharp reproofs, for our inward failings, as well as for our outward miscarriages.

AND if the Divine Law that is folded up in the very constitution of the Soul, be so powerful and piercing ; God cannot but abhor those services and complementary submissions of such as approach him with their *lips* , but leave their *hearts* behind them ; especially when we consider under the *New Testament*, how clearly the Law of Nature was explain'd and improv'd beyond the Standard of *Moses* , by our *Lord* and *Saviour* , its high and generous Principles by which
we

we are acted beyond the common level of Mankind, and rais'd to a participation of the Divine Nature. This is it that enters the Soul with its divine power and efficacy, and strikes down its pride under the Authority of God and Christ: It leads *every thought captive to its obedience, we are more than Conquerours, through Jesus Christ that loved us.* So far from being captive to the Law of Sin, that we can do all things through Christ that strengthens us. The Disciples of Moses Law, did vindicate themselves to the people, that they had not taken either Ox or Ass by violence or oppression; but S. Paul protests, he did not so much as covet any mans silver or gold.

WHEN we then sufficiently digest this Meditation of the Perfection of his Law, we must remember, he is not to be served in a trifling, indifferent manner; but we must meditate in his Law night and day. So the Psalmist, *O how love I thy Law, it is my meditation night and day, sweeter than the honey and the honey comb.* Those testimonies were more delicious unto him, than all the pleasures of Gold and Silver: In the glass of this Law,

Law, he saw all the blemishes of his Soul, and then he was transported with the beauty and purity of it. The Law of the Lord is perfect.

Pfal. 19.

3. I URGE this Truth from the Nature and consideration of our own Souls, their force and activity. How curious is it in its enquiries ? how fond of its contemplations ? Its pleasures are refin'd, pure and Angelical ; how swift in its thoughts from East to West ? it flies through the Earth, it makes to it self Ladders of the visible Creatures to climb to Heaven, that it may see the face of God.

Now if it dwell with so much vigour and complacency on lesser objects, how vigorously should it adore God himself, the first and original beauty ?

DID God furnish our Minds with such noble Powers, only to till the ground, or make provision for the Flesh, and bestow some transient thoughts on his service and obedience ? No certainly. This Soul of ours that can grasp so many Truths, and lodge them together without con-

confusion, that is all Life and Motion, must bestow its noblest and strongest desires on God; there needed not such intellectual furniture to feed our bellies, and feast our senses. The Beast enjoys those objects more feelingly, and with greater satisfaction; they want the uneasy alarms of Conscience, to awaken them to higher things, therefore they enjoy them without disturbance and interruption. But, *Poor Man*, when he forgets himself, and hearkens to the enchantments and flatteries of Sense, cannot so far unite with those despicable things, but that still the regrets and uneasy reflections of his mind call him higher, and reproach him when he forgets his parentage and original.

IF we then in some measure understand our selves, know but the frame and constitution of our own Soul, observe its motions and activity; if we feel the manner of its operations and reflections, its aspiring strength and vivacity; we must conclude, that God did not give us this Soul, to serve him negligently and carelessly, but to bestow upon him our highest adorations, our most profound

profound submissions, our deepest acknowledgments, our most joyful thank-givings : Nay, never to rest satisfied with our selves, until we attain to that habitual delight in his Worship, that the Angels have in Heaven, who wait with their Wings stretch'd, ready to fly when he commands.

OUR Souls are so near a kin to those bright favourites of Heaven, that though we cannot run so nimbly, yet ought we to come as near to them as may be. Though their present posture hath set them incomparably beyond us, yet we feel that our Souls claim their kindred, and acquaintance. 'Tis true, our incumbrances are many, but frequently may we gain ground, and let our Souls know their heavenly nature and activity, that they needed not be oppress'd with the weight of the Body, nor confin'd to those Walls of Flesh, but that at some time or other, nay, frequently, we may converse with God himself.

DID we feel the honour and satisfaction of those flights to Heaven; how they fortifie the mind; how much they lessen

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lessen the World ; how much they establish the Soul in its choice ; how they advance our Victory ; and confirm our hopes : We would grow more bold in repelling temptations ; more ardent in our prayers ; more watchful upon our guard ; nay, *more than Conquerours, through Jesus Christ that loved us.* Let us remember then, that whether we consider God, or his Law, or our own Souls. We must serve him with zeal and devotion, - with our strength and affection, *No man can serve two Masters.*

4. LET me urge this, from the Practice of the best of Men. *The zeal of* Psal. 69.9. *thy house (saith the Psalmist) hath eaten me up. Thy Testimonies have I taken as an heritage for ever ; for they are* Psal. 119.1. *the rejoicing of my heart. I have sworn, and I will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgments. I love thy command-* Psal. v. 127. *ments above gold, yea, above fine gold. Rivers of waters run down mine eyes, because men keep not thy Law. O how love I thy Law ! It is my meditation all the day ; at midnight will I rise to give thanks unto thee, because of thy righteous judgments. Nay, the*

the whole Book of *Psalms* is one continued proof of his zeal and fervour, and it is spent in the admiration of all his glorious Attributes. And this is so much the more considerable, that he was a *Prince* of much business, and had many affairs of peace and war to disturb his thoughts; neither the crowd of people, nor the toil of War, nor the Government of his Forces, nor the innumerable affairs, wherein *Kings* are necessarily engag'd, could make him forget his God. As

Psal. 40. 1. *the Hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after the living God. One day in thy house, is better than a thousand elsewhere.* Hence those frequent appeals to the Omniscience of God, that

Psal. 4. *he preferr'd his worship and honour, before his chiefest joy. Let others rejoice in their corn and wine, but Lord light up on us the light of thy countenance.*

FROM *David*, I may go to *Daniel* the chief Minister of State to a vast Empire. He was not diverted from his Devotion, neither by the allurements of the Court, nor the malice of his enemies, nor the avocations of business, nor the threatnings of the King, nor the terrors of

of the Lyons ; but three times a day, his windows being open, he set his face toward *Jerusalem* and prayed.

FROM *Daniel* to *Moses*. He refus'd to be call'd the Son of *Pharaoh's* daughter ; he chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season ; he esteem'd the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of *Egypt*. And that whole Chapter is but a Catalogue of those Worthies who served God with zeal and vigour, with triumph, and courage, and resolution, that became the heirs of an invisible recompence. The same Author in the sixth Chapter exhorts us, not to be slothful, but followers of them, who through Faith and Patience inherit the promises.

Now if we leave them under the *Old Testament*, and consider the practice of the first Christians ; how remarkable their zeal, how charitable, how devout, how indefatigable in all exercises of Piety and Devotion ; how ready to expose their greatest and most valuable concerns, to all hazards, for the defence

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The Fourth Sermon.

of the Gospel? How little did they value their Lives? how ambitious of Martyrdom? Nay, when the *Blood of Jesus* was but lately shed, it was so warm upon their hearts, that it kindled a fire of zeal, that no sufferings was able to quench; so heroick was their courage, so unwearied in their patience, so constant in all Christian performances. 2 Cor. 6. 5. *But in all things approving our selves as the Ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings, by pureness, by knowledge, by long-sufferings, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned.* And not only the Apostles, of whom principally the former Text may be meant, but their Proselytes also to Christianity, became such eminent instances of the most heroick virtue, even the weakest and most ignorant, did eclipse the fame of the greatest *Philosophers*. And we need not dwell any longer on this Consideration; we may take it for granted, that the practice of the best of men recommends the most ardent and vigorous zeal.

But

But 5. LET us consider the opposition that we meet with. The World arms it self against us by its practices, and tentations. We are surrounded on the right, and on the left hand with enemies; the whole Scene of our Life is a Warfare; we are no sooner baptiz'd, than we are list'd under our Saviour's Banners, to wrestle with all difficulties; and nothing that is truly good can be brought to perfection, without struggling and opposition. Hence so many Exhortations, that presuppose our danger and militant state. *Watch and pray: Work out your salvation with fear and trembling. Be sober, be vigilant; for your adversary the Devil goeth about.* ^{1 Cor. 16. 13.} *Watch ye, stand fast in the faith; quit you like men, be strong. Put on the whole armour of God, for we wrestle not against flesh and blood; but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of darkness in this world.* ^{Eph. 6. 11.}

WHEN our frailties and weaknesses are so many, when our corruptions are so strong, our circumstances so intricate,

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OUR

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our tentations disguis'd under variety of appearances ; our enemies numerous , subtle and unwearied ; when we row against the stream and current of inferior appetites ; judge whether we should obey the advice of Solomon , *Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do , do it with all thy might ; for there is no work , nor knowledge , nor wisdom , nor device in the grave whether thou goest . Work to day , for the night cometh on , wherein no man shall be able to work .* Nay , the very Graces of the Holy Ghost suppose the opposition that we are to meet with ; meekness , patience , long-suffering , humility , resignation , forgiving of injuries , do in a peculiar manner make up the *image of Jesus Christ* . The very nature of those Graces , is to smooth over , and bear with the more harsh and unpleasant circumstances of our life , and do suppose the most fervent and zealous , the most resolute and generous temper of Soul to be necessary .

Eccl.9.10.

St. John.

But *5.* THE former miscarriages of our life should alarm us to repentance , care and caution for the time to come .

Strive

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Strive to enter in at the strait gate, to press toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God. How happy a thing would it be, if we served God with so much cheerfulness and alacrity, as we served Satan, and our selves! Formerly we went forward to Hell in a full carere, like the swift Dromedary, or an untam'd Heifer, or like the Horse that rusheth into the Battel; or like the wild Ostrich, to whom God gave no Wisdom. We took complacency to be carried down the stream with rapid violence and fury; such the Apostle to *Titus* describes the former and unconverted state of the regenerate to have been; *For we our selves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, hateful, and hating one another.* Tit. 3. 3.

As Men of robust and healthful constitutions, when they recover out of a Fever; Nature in them very quickly fortifies it self against the next invasion, Thus when the Grace and Love of *Jesus* enters our hearts, and batters down pride and self-will; when Christ by his victorious and strong hand, hath bound

2 Cor. 7.
11.

the strong Man; then the Divine Nature erects its beautiful Trophies upon the ruine of the *old Man*: and the regenerate is revenged upon himself, for having abus'd so good, and so gracious, and so bountiful a Redeemer.

But 7. ADD to all this, the peculiar obligations of Christianity. *We are bought with the blood of Jesus, we are not our own, we are bought with a price: therefore let us surrender our selves entirely unto him, that gave himself for us.*

8. THE Slavery that they undergo, who serve sin, should add force to this Consideration. The service of sin exhausts the Spirits; and wearies the sinner even to despair and damnation; on the contrary, the way of virtue is smooth, regular, even and pleasant: *Her wayes are wayes of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.* Vice is rugged and intricate, full of labyrinths and turnings; and the wicked weary themselves to commit iniquity.

Proverbs.

Jeremiah.

I THINK, any one of those Considerations may startle us out of our security, and awaken us to lay hold upon eternal life, to go forward *without weariness, in the race that is set before us.* No man having put his hand to the plough, Luke 9. and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God. Know ye not, that they which run I Cor. 9. in a race, run all, but one obtaineth the prize.

BUT I hasten to the second Particular; and that is, the regular Method of his Zeal and Devotion. *He press'd toward the mark;* in the way marked out by the Master of the Game. There are very many zealous enough, but their zeal is blind, turbulent and factious: the Christian zeal acts strongly, but prudently; discreetly and humbly; and in subordination to them whom God hath set over us. In the fire of Hell, there is heat, without light; and the fury of zealots resembles it much; or rather is the beginning of it. We are not only to be active in our Christian course: but we are to order our Motion, by the Rules of our Institution.

IT is not enough to run strongly and swiftly for carrying the prize ; but one must also run within his Circle and Sphere, else by the Laws of the Game he falls short.

MY meaning is , when we run toward the Mark in the Christian course, we must act in all our performances, like the Disciples of that Institution, and like the Spirit of Christianity, and though we come short of perfection, yet our habitual byas being the *Love of Jesus*, we move *toward the Mark* , and in our way though clogged with many infirmities.

Now this Genius and Spirit of Christianity, discovers it self, 1. By the simplicity of our intentions. Matth. 6. 22. *The light of the body is the eye, if therefore thine eye be single , thy whole body shall be full of light.* By the *single eye*, in the judgment of most, is meant, the single and habitual design and resolution of advancing the glory of God : when this runs through all our actions
(sup-

(suppose the matter of them good and allowable) though they be depress'd by many imperfect adherences, yet we are sure of acceptance : for God loves to take up his residence with men of single and sincere intentions.

2. **THIS** is known by our disengagement from the World : the Genius of our Religion is stated against it, and all its most ordinary practices, fraud, dissimulation, vain glory, the satisfaction of any of our appetites, against the Rules of *Jesus Christ, is of the World*, and contradicts the *Spirit of Jesus* : for by it ^{1 John 2.} we are inspired to condemn it, and despise all its trifling enjoyments; and to square all our actions, with an eye to immortality and eternity. *Love not the World, neither the things that are in the World.*

3. **THIS** Spirit is known by the Dominion over our Passions, and the victory we have over tentations. The passions in the Soul have their true use (grief, fear, joy and anger) when they come, and go at the command of Reason. They are

are not to be extirpated as the Stoicks vainly pretended, but they are to be kept in awe, and within their bounds, as the passions in the *blessed Jesus* were. Now if we move thus in our *Christian Race*, we move streight toward the *Mark*, and in the way that our *Lord Jesus* marked for us: and this will undoubtedly carry us to the prize propos'd by our *Saviour*; which is the third Particular I was to speak to.

Thirdly, THE Prize of the High Calling, τὴν αἰα καλίστην. Dum in sublimi sederunt Brabantai, as the Learned *Grotius* hath it, those publick Judges of the Game, gave the signal from on high, to alarm the Competitors to make themselves ready. And the Son of God came down from Heaven, and reveal'd Immortality as the Prize; and he alarms the World by the Gospel, to despise the present Scene of things, and to carry their thoughts beyond this little Globe, to that life that is pure, durable, and in the presence of God for ever; this is so strong, that nothing but Inconsideration makes men neglect it. O Eternity! O Eternity!

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ternity! who can comprehend it? who
can without madness forget it? and re-
membring it, who can but *despise all* Coloss. 3.1
things in comparison with it?

*To God the Father, Son and
Holy Ghost, be all Power
and Glory for ever. Amen.*

A

A
S E R M O N
O N

2 P E T. I. ch. I. v. 4.

Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises ; that by these you might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

IT is not my present design to amuse you, with any Enquiry about the Author of this Epistle, whether he was S. Peter the Apostle; or S. Simon, the immediate Successor of S. James Bishop of Jerusalem, as is most probable. *Vid. Grot. in alter. quæ dicitur Sancti Petri Epist.*
My

My business is rather to invite your attention to the important Truths that are contain'd in this Verse ; which need but little explication, when we look back into the former. For the Glory and Power of God appear'd so conspicuous in the Ministry of our *Saviour*, that Infidelity becomes inexcusable; and it is by that Glory and Power, that the great and precious Promises of the Gospel are given unto us.

WHEN the Gospel was to be establish'd, and the Kingdom of Darkness to be pull'd down, there was a necessity that the arm of God should appear bare in the defence of the first, that he might confound the arts and delusions of the other. The Author puts the believing *Jews* in mind of this demonstration in the Verse preceeding the Text : for the Gospel appear'd in its beginnings, full of glory and power. And afterwards he argues, that the testimony of the Apostles could not be rejected ; for they were eye-witnesses of his Majesty. *They did not follow cunningly devis'd fables* ; they were most unlikely of all men to impose upon the World, being destitute

destitute of that artifice and subtilty that recommend secular interests and contrivances. And therefore the Christians might without any scruple or fear, receive the Gospel, as the undoubted Truth of God; the infallible Method of his Wisdom for the recovery of Mankind.

THE Text is the abstract of the whole Gospel, having couch'd in it the History of our Misery and Recovery; and the method whereby this wonderful contrivance was accomplish'd. In speaking to it, I sum up all I have to say in these four Particulars.

1. **THAT** there is a Corruption in the World.

2. **THAT** this Corruption may be escaped.

3. **THAT** we escape this Corruption, by the great and precious Promises of the Gospel.

4. **THAT** the Design and Tendency of the Promises, is to make us partakers of the Divine Nature.

I. I

1 Epist.
S. John.

1. THERE is a Corruption in the World. We have the Testimony of *S. John* to this great Truth, that the *whole world lyes in wickedness*: and this is very evident, if we consider, 1. The opposition and strugglings that we feel within our selves, before we are illuminated by the Gospel. 2. The slow progress of Grace after we are illuminated. And 3. The Relapses of the best of Men into their former faults and failings.

1. I SAY, Do but consider the strugglings of our Reason against our Corruptions, before we are acquainted with the Gospel. And this proves sufficiently, that we have an unhappy byass in our Nature, to oppose the Dictates of Reason, as well as Revelation. We are made up of Body and Spirit; *there is a Law in the Members, bringing into Captivity the Law of the Mind; crossing its counsels and designs; bowing and bending its most heroick resolutions; what a load do we feel, when we would fly towards Heaven?* Our sensual inclinations and propensions baffle and affront the Sovereignty of the Mind. And the
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Schools of all the *Pagan Philosophers* ; seem to reason from this Truth, as from the universal experience of Mankind. We feel such intestine commotions between our Reason and our lower Appetites ; that the one is run down against its natural tendencies ; oppressed and buried under the drudgeries of the Body : So that we cannot but see and feel the decays of our first Beauty, the lamentable ruins of our original frame. And this needs neither proof nor illustration, to any that is so far acquainted with himself, as to reflect on his own acts and inward-motions. How frequently is he hurried to follow the importunity of his Senses against the clearest light of his Soul ? How often baffled in his best thoughts, by their unreasonable clamour and noise ? In one word, when we would prove that there is a corruption in the World , we need no more than bid men of ingenuity and consideration look within themselves ; and they must acknowledge the great disorder that attends on most of their actions, and that it proceeds from some unhappy principle of Corruption , that maintains a constant War against the

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Spirit.

Spirit. What God made, was beautiful and harmonious; the Soul of Man, as well as his Countenance, looked towards Heaven; his lower faculties were then calm and obedient. But when we view *him* in his present condition, we feel that he is miserable; and his greatest infelicity is, that he knows not (of himself) where to find his remedy.

2. THIS is clear, if we consider the slow progress of Grace, after we are acquainted with the Gospel. This corruption is so inveterate and so deeply rooted, that even when we are rescued from its tyranny, it yet molests our peace, and disturbs our quiet. We must fight after we are in possession of *Canaan*, as well as when we struggled with our enemies in the *Wilderness*. My meaning is, that the *Canaanite* is still in the Land; and the most signal Victory leaves some remains of the Enemy, though scatter'd and broken, yet they are very troublesome and uneasy.

SUCH is the strength and enchantment of tentations, such the subtilty of our

our enemies , the infirmity of our Nature, and the soft insinuations of Sense, that unless we keep the strictest watch, we lose more ground in a moment, than we are able to recover in a considerable time. And though we feel our selves sometimes full of life and alacrity, *to run the race that's set before us* ; yet, in an instant such weariness creeps over all our faculties, that we grow lumpish and heavy, cold and unactive as the Earth. So difficult a thing it is to climb up the Hill, to row against the stream, to change the old customs of our Nature ; to pull up inveterate habits, and to *crucifie the flesh, with the affections and lusts thereof.*

So backward are we to receive the impressions of the Gospel, that when our Souls are form'd into the *Image of Jesus Christ*, we again look back unto *Egypt*. God is provoked every moment to desert us ; his Graces are not improved, his Spirit is resisted, his love despised ; so slowly goes our Victory forward , after full and plain Convictions, the most solemn Vows, and deliberate Resolutions. If the Light of the Gospel, in conjunction with , and superadded to our Reason,

conquers our Corruption so slowly ; we must conclude , that it is very deeply rooted in our Nature ; especially when we consider,

3. **THE** relapses of the best of Men into their former follies. Nothing proves more the weakness of Humane Nature, than the remarkable failings of Wise and Religious Men. And it is observable, that the Divine Providence hath sometimes permitted the most eminent Saints to fall into the very sins that they most abhorr'd, and were most opposite unto their habitual resolutions. What more inconsistent with the generous and warlike Spirit of *David* , than by treachery and baseness to expose his faithful Servant *Uriah* to unavoidable ruine and destruction ? What more unagreeable to the Wisdom of *Solomon* , than to prostitute his Royal Authority to the humors and fancies of so many Women ? Was there any thing more unlike the zeal and courage of *S. Peter* , than to be so soon frightened at the Challenge of a poor Maid ? If we are kept from the most notorious Crimes, we should wholly impute it to the Grace and Favour of God.

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THE danger and prevailing force, the universality and pertinacious obstinacy of this Corruption, cannot be better express'd, than in the Language of the Holy Scriptures. * *We are transgressors from* ^{† Isa. 48.} *the womb; † shapen in iniquity, and con-* ^{v. 8.} *ceived in sin.* * *Branches of the Wild* ^{† Psal. 51.} *Olive.* † *Naturally dead in trespasses* ^{* Rom. 11} *and sins.* * *Born only of the Flesh.* Sin ^{† Eph. 2. 1.} *is present with us, and doth so easily be-* *set us.* *We are become servants unto* *sin; and in the Apostle's phrase, brought* *into bondage.* And this is the reason why most men are past all feeling; their *Consciences being scared with a hot iron;* they are deaf unto the suggestions of the Spirit; secure against all the Threats of the Law; they are not wrought upon either by hopes or fears; and in a word, they stand out against the variety of Gods methods,

WHEN we reflect upon the former Truth with attention; It teaches us humility. For if this Corruption be so in- ^{Job 15. 14} *fectious, so pertinacious, and so difficultly cur'd; may not we infer with Eli-* *phaz the Temanite, What is man that he*

should be clean? and he which is born of a Woman, that he should be righteous?
 v. 15. *Behold he putteth no trust in his Saints, yea, the heavens are not clean in his sight, how much more abominable and filthy is man, which drinketh iniquity like water.*

WHEN we remember that we have been made a *little lower than the Angels, crowned with glory and dignity*, yet now fall'n in a manner below the Beasts that perish; that our understandings are darkned with ignorance and error; and our Souls become the habitations of many passions; ought not this consideration alone, to take down our pride and vanity? There is not a more compendious method to attain true humility, than to be acquainted with thy self; the diseases of our Body are so many, that Physicians have not names for them; and the weakneses of our Mind are many more. So many are the tossings and contradictions of our thoughts, the multiplicity of our fancies; the roivings and variety of our imaginations, that in a minute we may learn, that *every man at his best estate is altogether vanity.*

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CAN there be then any enquiry more seasonable and more profitable, than to ask, if this *Corruption* may be escaped? And this leads me to the second Particular that I promis'd to speak to; and that is,

2. THAT this *Corruption* may be escaped. And this I shall endeavour to make clear, from these three Considerations. 1. The Remorse of our own Consciences. 2. The Pleadings and Expostulations of God himself in the Holy Scriptures. 3. The Strength, Nature and Efficacy of Spiritual Assistances offered in the Gospel.

1. I SAY, Consider the Remorse of Conscience. *S. Paul* is witness, that the very Heathens had it, when they transgress'd the Laws of Nature, the Soul did punish it self by remorse and bitter reflections; and when they were innocent, there innocence was an invisible support against all Calumnies and Reproaches. Their thoughts did *both accuse* Rom. 1. and *excuse*. I would gladly know, whence the uneasiness of a Man's mind, upon the wilful violation of God's Law

The Fifth Sermon.

arises? The severe regrets and piercing thoughts, wherewith the Soul lashes her self, if there were no other Argument to prove the whole of Natural Religion, this remorse alone must necessarily infer, and defend all its Principles. Do we use to blame our selves, because we do not fly with Wings, because we cannot measure the Heavens, drain the Seas, or remove Mountains? No certainly.

THE remorse of Conscience feeds it self with this thought alone, that the evil which we have committed, might have been avoided. And if there be no ground for any such thought, there is no more place for any degrees of this remorse of Conscience. Listen then to the suggestions of thy own mind, and you shall immediately feel, that you might have done otherwise; that you might have followed that which is just and right, and have avoided that very sin, for which thou art so severely chastis'd and lash'd by thy Conscience: else whence is this sharp and piercing torture of thy mind, upon the commission of wilful and deliberate sins?

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EPICURETUS his *Philosophy* may be reduc'd to these two. 1. To order prudently the things that fall within our power. 2. To suffer cheerfully that which we cannot possibly avoid. And the Light of Nature could not possibly prescribe a more excellent method to attain true tranquillity of Spirit. When thou art then most impartial in the survey of thy Conscience, tell me sincerely, whom do you blame? and if you blame your self, then is it purely upon this account: because you might have reform'd the faults and omissions that are then under consideration.

2. THIS Truth appears from the pathetick expostulations of God in the Holy Scriptures. He as it were comes down from his Throne of Majesty, and stoops to reason the case with incorrigible sinners. He pleads with them from acknowledg'd Principles of Reason, as if he stood upon even ground; not to upbraid them with their weaknesses, but to provoke their ingenuity; to work upon all their Passions; to assault their Souls on all quarters; to see if they

- Isa. 1. 18. they will repent and be reclaim'd. Come now and let us reason together (saith the Lord) though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wooll.
- Jer. 2. 5. Thus saith the Lord, What iniquity have your fathers found in me, that they are gone far from me, and have walked after vanity, and are become vain? And
- v. 10, 11. — again, Pass over the Isles of Chittim, and see, and send unto Kedar, and consider diligently; and see if there be such a thing? Hath a Nation changed their Gods, which are yet no Gods? But my people have changed their glory, for that which doth not profit. Be astonish'd O ye heavens, at this! and be horribly afraid. And again, Hear now, O house of Israel! are not my ways equal, are not your ways unequal. Sometimes he courts their Passions, by the most powerful Charms all crowded together, in a strain of pity, condescension and severity. Wa unto thee
- Jer. 13. 27. O Jerusalem! when wilt thou be made clean, when shall it once be? And our Saviour in the Gospel, thus assaults them when they were upon the precipice of ruine. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thee, as a Hen gathereth

thereth her Chickens under her wings, but ye would not. And again, You will not come unto me (saith our Saviour) that you might have life.

FROM all these reasonings put together, we see that God condescends to plead with us from our own Convictions; and indeed if our Souls were not accessible to Arguments and Reasonings, the Stones might be as wisely address'd to, as we could be reason'd unto reformation.

THE possibility of this change and escape from the Corruptions of the World, appears 3. From the strength and efficacy of that Grace which is offer'd in the Gospel. We need no other proof of the possibility of such a Reformation as we plead for, than the Victory and Success of Christianity over Vice and Corruption, amongst them who have cordially embraced it. This was the Argument that the first *Apologists* for our Religion made use of, to prove its Divinity. Such a wonderful change could not be wrought in its Profelytes, without a heavenly Power; and if so many have been
actually

actually changed, then it is modest to infer, that our reformation is possible.

WHEN we remember the bias of our inclinations, how contradictory they are to the designs of the Gospel, how adverse to purity, simplicity and self-denial; it can be nothing less than a Miracle, to pull down strong holds, and lofty imaginations, and to lead every thought captive to the obedience of Christ, to take up our Cross and follow him; this is the triumph of the Gospel. And if the Grace of God did not assist us, how is it conceivable, that such weak and feeble Creatures, should grapple with so many difficulties, and at last overcome them? That the Change we plead for is possible, even from under the power of the most inveterate habits and the grossest sins, is further clear from 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10, 11. *Know ye not, that the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God. Be not deceived, neither Fornicators, nor Idolaters, nor Adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the Kingdom of God. And such were some of*

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of you, but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

FROM what I have said, it is very evident, that no man ought to plead for his impenitence, as if he were irrecoverably chain'd up under the power of his sins and evil habits. God pleads with him, and his own Conscience expostulates, and the experience of all sober men, baffle his pretences; for no man is so fatally ty'd to misery and corruption, but that he may break his bonds, and *escape the corruption that is in the World through lust.* To day then, let me exhort you, *if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, break up the Prison doors;* the Grace of the Gospel is mighty and powerful; you cannot be captive against your wills; this corruption that prevails in the World may be escaped and overcome. Do not fright your selves out of your duty, by vain apparitions, scarecrows and counterfeit apologies, such as the slothful man in the *Proverbs* is said to use; *There is a Lyon without, I shall be slain in the streets.* All such excuses
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are vain and impertinent; whether they are taken 1. From the difficulty of removing old habits: or, 2. From the variety of our worldly incumbrances; or, 3. From the multitude and strength of temptations: or, 4. From the severities of Christian Religion.

I. **THE** excuses taken from the difficulty of old habits. The incorrigible sinner will plead, that the *Ethiopian cannot change his skin, nor the Leopard his spots, nor they that are accustomed to do evil, ever learn to do well.*

Vid. Orig. cont. Cels. **THUS** *Celsus* against *Origen* seems to deny the possibility of any such reformation, as the Christian Religion requires: because customary sins become a second Nature, that no punishments can reform or change; yet (saith *Origen*) herein *Celsus* not only contradicts the Christians, but all others who own any generous principles of Philosophy. And there *Origen* gives instances in their own Heroes, and such as were admir'd for Vertue among the Heathons, that our recovery from Vice was very practicable; and though it be difficult in the beginning

ning to eradicate old habits, yet when the first assaults are over (if we vigorously prosecute so excellent a design) it becomes pleasant and delightful. Herein appeared the power of the Gospel, that it made men exemplary in these very Graces that were most opposite to their former bias. Thus the first *Apologists* plead in behalf of Christian Religion : *Let us see (saith Lactantius) the most proud, and he will become humble ; the most covetous, liberal ; the most fierce and cruel, tame and meek like a Lamb.* And is it possible, that such a change can be wrought, but by a supernatural Cause ; by light, and motives far beyond our former principles? If we act by worldly Maxims, we must be confin'd in our thoughts to the lower Regions ; but *when the day spring from on high visits us*, the Soul feels within her self new powers and faculties, which earthly motives could not put in motion. Therefore though evil habits could not be thoroughly reform'd by the faint and pusillanimous attempts of the *Pagan Philosophers* ; yet the most inveterate customs and wicked practices could not resist the light of the Gospel. When we plead that

that we cannot do otherwise than we do, it is not our Reason that speaks, but our laziness, our idleness and sensuality: for all wise men, and the starkest fools, in their lucid intervals thought otherwise, else there is no distinction between choice and blind fate; between Men and Beasts; between Reason and Mechanism; between Intellect and Matter. If you then persist in this obstinate foolery, that you cannot be reform'd from your vicious conversation, your reasonings design to prove no more, than that you have no excellency above the Beasts that perish; and by such arguings you take the nearest methods to resemble them in the strictest sense.

2. **SOME** plead the incumbrances of the World. And it is certain that most men endeavour to excuse themselves by such Arguments. The vanity and emptiness of this excuse is represented by our Saviour, *One went to his Farm, another to his Merchandise, and alledg'd, they could not come.* But this is the highest contempt of the Wisdom of God, as if there could be any business of so great importance, as the saving of our Souls.

Souls. And besides, to prove the impertinence of this excuse, I can instance Men of *Royal Quality* and vast incumbrances, who amidst all their divertisements and avocations, found leisure for their devotion, and the Worship of God. *Moses* was a great Captain, a great Prince, and a great Politician; yet his hands were lifted up to Heaven in Prayer, when others must needs support him. *Job* was very illustrious among the *Arabians*, and yet under a deluge of Calamities, and the continual repinings of his Wife, he preach'd resignation. *David* was a Warlike Prince, yet the melodious Strains of his Harp were as Devout as Poetical. *Solomon* a King, the greatest and wisest that ever sat upon the Throne of *Judah*, when he enter'd upon the Government, in the first place, fell down before God, and begged *Wisdom*, to order and conduct so numerous a People. *Daniel* is entrusted with the affairs of so many Provinces, yet he prayed thrice a day towards *Jerusalem*. The Eunuch whom *Philip* baptiz'd, read the Prophecies of *Isaiah* in his Chariot, when he was upon his Journey.

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LET us not then plead the incumbrances of the World : for they that most converse with God, are taught even to dispatch their worldly affairs with greater discretion than their neighbours ; because no part of their time is spent impertinently.

3. SOME plead the strength and impetuous violence of temptations. It must be confess'd, that the objects of Sense do strongly allure and flatter the mind to unworthy compliances ; and that they entice us constantly to bodily pleasures ; yet if it be uneasy to overcome such insinuations, let the very difficulty provoke our courage ; for the most glorious enterprises are atchiev'd by patience and fortitude. And if the prize of honour were not encompass'd with Thorns and Briars, it might fall to the share of every despicable Wretch ; whereas indeed, honour crowns the Heroes, and such as resolutely face the enemy. Was it sleep, softness, ease and luxury, that first distinguish'd the Nobles from their inferiours ? No. It was magnanimity, valour, courage, fidelity and

and patience, that rais'd them above their neighbours. And if such a transient thing as the favour of a *King*; and the *Hosanna's* of the *Croud*, cannot be justly obtain'd, but by toil and labour; how is it possible, that we can think to gain immortal honours, without wrestling and struggling? God hath placed us on this Theatre to act our part, to try our patience and our fidelity; and with a design to trample upon the World by his Grace in us, that *we may be more than Conquerours through Christ that loved us.*

The temptations from the World are indeed very terrible, *the Lusts of the Flesh, the Lusts of the Eye, and the Pride of Life.* But may not all these be conquered by Faith, and the Spirit of Christianity? their strength (if we approach them closely) is not so formidable. 'Tis true, they appear invincible to the soft and delicate, but they have no relish to the Soul illuminated with the knowledge of Christ. The eye of Faith discovers their emptiness, they are but shadows and appearances of things; attended in their most flattering dress, with vanity and vexation of Spirit. Let us awake

then, and see what is it, that thus enchants us into folly and sin. What are those pleasures that we doat so much upon, if once compar'd to the pure rivers of pleasure that are at his right hand.

4. SOME plead the severity of Christianity, to excuse them from the practice of it. The Precepts of humility, meekness and self-denial are intolerable to such: but I must tell them, that such Precepts appear only terrible to strangers, and such as have no mind to come under any yoke or discipline at all. The experience of the best men puts it beyond all debate, that there is no rest or tranquillity of Spirit, but in the practice of such Commandments. Nay, the pleasures that attend a pious life, are pure and unmixt; they are *sweeter than the honey or the honey-comb*. With what transports and exstastic elevations did the Psalmist long to appear in the place of God's presence? O, when shall I come and appear before God! We are not acquainted with the ravishing satisfactions of Religion, because we keep at a distance; and therefore we are terrified by our first conflicts, but if we struggled
vigo.

Psalm.

Psalm:

vigorously until the noisome rubbish of our corruptions were remov'd, then our Souls might become a clean habitation for the Spirit of God ; and where the Spirit of God dwells, there is also peace, light and tranquillity ; joy unspeakable and full of glory. What an impregnable Garrison against calumny and disaster, is a *Conscience void of offence towards God, and towards man !* How vain is it to endeavour the painting of it by rhetorical colours ! Words cannot reach it, the bold Metaphors of *Poets* are faint in comparison of it. It receives comforts immediately from the hand of God, and such as cannot be taken away from us ; so strong are the pleasures that do attend the practice of true Religion.

WHY then are we frighted with *Mormo's* and apparitions of our own invention ? Let us believe our Saviour, who hath expressly told us, that *his yoke is ease, and his burden is light.* The more we plead in favour of our bondage, the more entangled we are by our corruption, and the more miserable is our condition. This Corruption may be escaped and reform'd, and whatever is

usually pleaded in its defence, is vain and unreasonable. Let me ask then, how this Contagion, that has so universally over-run Mankind, may be cured? And the Text makes answer to this, that this Corruption is escaped by *the great, and the precious promises*:

Acts 26.
18.

AND this leads me to the third Particular, that I am oblig'd to speak to: The Gospel in it self is the great and last Engine of God's Goodness and Wisdom, for the recovery of the World; and the Promises of the Gospel are the Wheels upon which it moves. So much Spirit and Life did go alongst with the first preaching of the Gospel, that it shook the Pillars of the Kingdom of Darkness, threw open the Prisons of Satan, and loos'd whole Societies of Men from their bondage. The Apostles did *open their eyes, and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God*. The Promises of the Gospel are the counterpoise that God hath laid in the other Scale against sin. He principally designs to deliver from sin, and from the Love of the World, because it leads unto sin; and the Promises of the Gospel

spel have a peculiar energy to save us from the one, and to deter us from the other. If we believ'd the Promises of the Gospel, without fear and hypocrisie, we would immediately turn our backs upon our sins, especially when we remember, that these very Promises are environ'd about with the most terrible denunciations of the wrath of God against the disobedient. *The Lord Jesus* ^{2 Thess. 1.} *Christ shall be revealed from heaven with 7, 8. his mighty Angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.* Can there be any thing so powerful to alienate our affections from the World, as the Promises of the Gospel? How far was the glory of the ^{Heb. 11.} Court of Egypt below the Spirit of Moses, when he saw him that is invisible, and had respect unto the recompence of reward? We are exprelly told by S. John, that if ^{1 John 2.} *any man love this world, the love of the 14. Father, is not in him.* And again, that the friendship of this world, is enmity with God. And S. Paul tells us, that the ^{Coloss. 3.} *Christians must not set their affections on the things on Earth, for their life is hid with God in Christ.*

THE brightness of our Inheritance obscures the glory of the World. *This is the promise that he hath promised us, eternal life.* And now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but this we know, that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Did we weigh the Gospel Promises as they deserve, and think of them with love and application, how powerful are they to disengage us from the entanglements of this present life, and to promote the reformation that the Gospel enjoins.

I. LET us heartily believe the Promises. Eternity seriously and frequently pondered, exhausts all our strength and all our thoughts. It fortifies our Souls against the flatteries of the World, and alienates our affections from the Earth. *The Patriarchs saw the promises afar off, and embraced them, and confessed, that they were but strangers and pilgrims upon the earth.* And if the dark view that the Patriarchs had was so mighty to support their Spirits under the old Oeconomy, what may not we do,

Heb. 11.
13.

do, who are animated by the clear and glorious Promises of the Gospel ?

2. LET us lean on these Promises in our most difficult circumstances. For ^{2 Cor. 4. 16, 17, 18.} which cause we faint not, but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen, are temporal; but the things which are not seen, are eternal. We rejoyce (says the same Apostle) in our tribulations. Patience under sufferings, is the peculiar ornament of our Saviour's Disciples; for they only have the surest Antidote against despondency. The Devil, that can transform himself into an Angel of Light, cannot counterfeit Christian Meekness and Patience. It is no stupidity, but a rational submission to the Will of our Father; they that are Martyrs for the World, or their own Pride, may for a while put on a resolute sullenness: but true Christian calmness and magnanimity

ty springs from the hope of glory, and the Spirit of Jesus.

- 2 Cor. 7. 1. 3. *Having these promises (saith the Apostle) let us cleanse our selves from all filthiness, both of the Flesh and of the Spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.* 'Tis certain, that every man that
- 1 Joh. 3. 3. hath this hope in him, *purifieth himself even as he is pure.* If we are Candidates for eternal life, our Souls must be purified from Vice, *for the pure in heart only shall see God.*
- Matth. 5.
- Heb. 4. 1. 4. *Let us therefore fear, lest the promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.* The Israelites in the Wilderness came short of the Promises made to them by their fickleness and inconstancy. *Their goodness was like the early dew* (as the Prophet speaks); and by their cowardice they were afraid of the Children of Anak, partly by their unbelief, they would not believe Moses, nor the faithful Spies. And this is easily applicable to our case; for there is no way to be saved, but to believe the Promises, to break

Psal. 106.
12, 13, &c
Hoseah.

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break through all obstacles, to fight the good fight of Faith, and to lay hold of eternal life.

5. LET us ponder, and consider the excellencies of these Promises. I shall name but the two Epithets bestow'd upon them in the Text. 1. They are Great. 2. They are Precious. I say,

1. They are Great: and that in three regards. 1. With regard to their Author, the only begotten Son of God, whom all the Angels worship and adore. He is the brightness of his Fathers glory, and the express image of his person, and upholds all things by the word of his power. Heb. 1. 3. This one consideration is enough to overawe the boldest sinner, and it is frequently taken notice of, to magnifie the Gospel, and to recommend to us the Precepts of our Saviour, that he was in the form of God, and thought it no robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, &c. Phil. 2. 6, 7, 8. Shall we contemn the Promises made by the Son of God? God sent his Son to give the Jews the last, and most undeniable proof of his Love and Wisdom: Certainly they will
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reverence my Son. Thus reasons the Author to the Hebrews, *How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him? And again, He that despised Moses Law died without mercy under two or three Witnesses; of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the Covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of Grace. Against whom does the incorrigible sinner sport himself? against the Son of God, and the clearest proofs of his love. For herein is love, not that we loved him, but that he loved us, and gave his Son to be a propitiation for our sins.*

2. THE Promises are Great in their intrinsic value. I mean not only the Promise of eternal life, but all the other Promises that are of a relative and subordinate Nature, the Graces of the Spirit, the remission of our sins, the peace of our Consciences, these are things to be valued above Gold and Silver. *Wisdom*

dom is preferred above the choicest Rubies; the Gold of Ophir is not to be compar'd unto her. Therefore the Graces of the Spirit are compar'd unto the most costly things; I counsel thee to buy of me Gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white rayment, that thou mayest be cloathed, and the shame of thy nakedness do not appear, and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see. Rev. 3. 18.

3. The Promises are Great in their tendency and design, to recover the World sunk into Corruption; to overthrow the Worship of Devils, to enlighten the World, to take down the Kingdom of Darkness, and to advance the Image of God upon the Souls of Men; were designs becoming the Goodness and Majesty of the Son of God. But of this I shall have occasion to speak under the fourth Particular. And therefore I consider the second Epithet bestowed upon the Promises. They are not only Great, but,

2. PRECIOUS. And that in regard of their 1. Price. 2. Certainty. 3. Du-

1 Pet. i.
18.

3. Durableness. 1. In regard of their Price. St. Peter informs us, that we are not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from our vain conversation, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without spot or blemish. There is no Religion wants its Sacrifice, and this is the Mysterious Sacrifice of our Religion; the blood that speaketh better things than the blood of Abel; that powerful Atonement, that so successfully pleads for pity and compassion in the ears of God; the Sacrifice under whose intercession we come with boldness to the Throne of Grace; the Sacrifice that laid aside all the Mosaic Oblations; the Sacrifice that was typified by all the former, and was more acceptable unto God, than the Cattel upon a thousand hills. This is the Sacrifice that the Prophets foretold, and the Apostles preach'd, and upon which we must lean at the hour of death. Nature teacheth us to fly to the strongest refuge, when we are reduc'd to the saddest extremities. And therefore do we grasp the Merit of his Sacrifice, in our last conflicts and agonies; for he is the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world. This

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is the Sacrifice, that bears the weight of all their sins who are penitent. So reasons the Divine Author to the *Hebrews*; for if the blood of Bulls and of Goats, and ashes of an Heifer sprinkling the unclean, *Heb. 9. 13,* sanctifieth to the purifying of the Flesh; ¹⁴ how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your Conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

THEY that allow him no more, than to be a resolute Martyr for the Truth; who rob us of the comforts of his Sacrifice and Propitiation; take away the great pillar of our hope at the hour of death; they would reform us unto a gentile kind of *Paganism*, though there be no error more plainly opposite to the Scriptures than theirs. For the Notion of a piacular Sacrifice, and the penal substitution of it in the room of the criminal, was receiv'd amongst all Nations; and the Scripture makes use of the same words that are used by other Authors, to express a proper atonement, when they speak of the Sacrifice of our blessed Saviour.

WHEN

WHEN we consider this, it may confirm our hope, and withal put us in mind, *how fearful a thing it is to trample upon the blood of the Son of God; for being redeem'd by his blood, we are no more our own.*

2. THE Promises are precious, because of their certainty. The frame of Nature may sooner be dissolv'd, the pillars of the Creation may shake and crumble into their first disorder, rather than that his Word should fail; *for he is everlasting truth, and he cannot lye. Thus saith the Lord, which giveth the Sun for a light by day, and the Ordinances of the Moon, and of the Stars for a light by night, which divideth the Sea, when the waves thereof roar, the Lord of Hosts is his Name. If those Ordinances depart from before me, saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a Nation before me for ever.* These Promises are made to the Spiritual seed of the true Israelites; as is proved by S. Paul. And therefore to remove all our doubts and diffidence, all our distrust and hesitation, they are confirm'd
by

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by his Oath; *Wherein God willing more* Heb. 6.
abundantly to shew unto the heirs of pro- 17, 18, 19.
mise, the immutability of his Counsel, con-
firmed it by an Oath. That by two immu-
table things, in which it was impossible for
God to lye, we might have a strong conso-
lation, who have fled for refuge to lay
hold upon the hope set before us.

3. THE Promises are precious, in regard of their durableness, I mean that the things promised are eternal. There is nothing liable to decay, that can give true repose to the Spirit of a Man; the Christian Religion settles the frame, and satisfies the enquiries of our Souls, by bringing life and immortality to light. Nothing else can satisfy the vast capacities of the mind of Man. The endless duration of our happiness is express'd in the Scriptures, by full and plain phrases. *And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life.* ^{1 John 2. 25.} And again, in the Gospel of S. John, *He that keepeth my sayings, shall never see death.* And S. Peter assures us, *that we are begotten again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead: To an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and*

^{1 John 2. 25.}

^{1 Pet. 1. 3, 4}

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that

that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you. And can there be any thing, that so adequately satisfies the boundless desires, and intellectual appetites of a reasonable Creature, as an eternal weight of glory. O Eternity! who can forget Thee, that remembers himself, and the frame of his Nature? Who can contemn eternal things, that thinks that he himself is any thing more excellent than the Beasts that perish? Have we naturally such strong inclinations to immortality, and can we despise the Gospel that prepares and trims our Souls for life eternal? Who can reflect on the variety and Spirituality of his own thoughts, and yet conclude, that he was made to *make provison for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof?* Let no such thoughts dwell within thee, but rather *look at the things*

2 Cor. 5. 1. *which are not seen. For we know, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.* And now when we look upon whole Gospel, its entire frame and design we may safely say of it, as the Apostle says of its Promises, that it is *Great and Precious* in all its lineaments and features.

Especially

Especially when we consider the great design that is carried on by the Gospel, and that is nothing less, than to make us partakers of the Divine Nature. And this leads me to the fourth Particular, that I promis'd to speak to: *viz.*

4. **THE** Scope of the Gospel and its Promises, to restore the Image of God on the Souls of men, to repair the breaches and decays of Humane Nature; to make him look up again to Heaven, with briskness and innocence, as he did when he was newly form'd by the finger of God; to restore life unto the degenerate World, not that animal and feculent life that oppresses the Divine Nature, but a life of true Reason, united to God, and fitted for the Society of Angels; to make Man as near unto God, as Humane Nature could allow; and all Mankind who allow themselves the exercise of their Reason, must acknowledge at first view, that this is the top of Humane Glory, the height of true felicity, the elevation of Reason to its noblest exercise and object to be made like unto God.

THE *Eternal Son of God* became Man, that he might heal the bruises and wounds, that we received by the first *Adam*. To as many as received him, to them gave

Hierocl. τὰ ἔξῃς παρ-
γίλλεται Θεὸς ὅς ἐστιν ἀνθρώπου
ποιήσας ἐν ὅσῳ οὐδὲν ἀν-
θρώπου Θεὸς γινώσκαι.

Joh. 1. 12. *he power to become the Sons of God, even*
ver. 13. *to them that believe on his Name. Which*

were born not of blood, nor of the Will of the Flesh, nor of the Will of Man, but of the Father. *Behold, what manner of Love the Father hath bestowed on us, that we should be called the Sons of God. We must be new moulded into the Image of our Maker; we must live no more unto sin, but unto God: we must be acted by higher Motives and Principles, than the Life of Nature: We must flee our course towards Heaven by other Engines, than such as set the World in motion. And so much is imply'd in that saying*

Matth. 10. *of our Saviour, He that loveth Father or*
37. *Mother more than me, is not worthy of me; and he that loveth Son or Daughter*
v. 38. *more than me, is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his Cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.*

To

To make this a little more clear, I shall enquire into two things: 1. Why there must be such a thorough change of our Nature? 2. Wherein do the Characters of the Divine Nature plainly appear.

1. There must be such a thorough change of our Nature. Whether we consider, 1. The plain account of Scripture. Or, 2. The Notions we have of the Deity. Or, 3. The Corruption of our Nature, and its distance from Heaven.

1. Do but consider the plain account of Scripture. *Without Holiness it is impossible to see God. He that is in Christ, hath crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts thereof. He that hath this hope, purifieth himself, even as he is pure.* Heb. 12.¹⁴ 1 Joh. 3. 3. God hath declared in innumerable places of Scripture, that there is no access to his favour, but by an entire reformation; his eyes penetrate to the Center of our Spirits; all things are naked and open before him. Though the Gospel hath the Nature of a Covenant, it is no less

the transcript of his Nature, than his Royal Edict: Holiness is as much our happiness, as our duty; and no arts, no shifts, can preserve the favour of God and our sins together. How strangely presumptuous must they be, who think to compound with the Almighty, and venture to bring (instead of a true heart, sincere love, and filial simplicity) Sacrifices, Oblations and Perfumes. To

Isa. vi. 11. *what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me, saith the Lord; I am full of the burnt offerings of Rams, and the fat of fed Beasts, and I delight not in the blood of Bullocks, or of Lambs, or*

v. 17. *of He-Goats: Learn to do well, seek judgement, relieve the oppressed, judge the Fatherless, plead for the Widow.* The New and the Old Testament, the Patriarchal, as well as the Mosaic Dispensation, the Pagan as well as the Christian; all of them acknowledge, that *this is pure, and undefiled Religion*; because it is agreeable to the Nature, as well as the Authority of God; *for he hath no pleasure at all in the death of a sinner.* And therefore we are plainly told by the Prophets and the Apostles, that nothing short of true integrity can please God, and

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and that this is his delight. *Have I any pleasure at all that the Wicked* Ezek. 18:
should dye, saith the Lord God, and not 21.
that he should return from his ways and live? Consider that remarkable advertisement of the Prophet *Micah*; *He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and* Mic. 6. 8.
what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God. Therefore we are commanded by the *Baptist*, to bring forth fruits meet for repentance. Mat. 3. 8.
It is not every one that saith Lord, Lord, Mat. 7. 21.
shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but he that doth the Will of my Father which is in Heaven. The conclusion of all this, is no other, than that every one 2 Tim. 2.
that nameth the name of Jesus must de- 19.
part from all iniquity. Our Religion is very pure, and it is the last revelation of his Will, that God vouchsafes to Mankind. And therefore it bears the nearest resemblance of the Divine Nature, and is perfective of ours; and the Disciples of this Religion must not think to recommend themselves to God or Mankind, by artificial knacks of hypocrisy, disfigured faces, and Pharisaical Prayers; but rather by ardent zeal, un-

affected simplicity, the most generous charity, sincere mortification, and a Will resign'd to his Infinite Wisdom.

2: LET us suppose, that the Scriptures did not so peremptorily inculcate the necessity of this change, yet the Notions that we have of God, confirm this truth, that nothing short of true Piety, can recommend us unto Him; that in order to our Salvation, we must be partakers of the Divine Nature. Is he such an easie Majesty, that he may be put off with multitude of Sacrifices, costly Oblations and outward Solemnities of Religion? Can he be diverted from the execution of his Justice by complementary Addresses? Pray what do we take him to be? Is he fond of Trifles and Ceremonies? To imagine that sighs and tears, and melancholy reflections will propitiate the Deity, charges him with severity and cruelty; as if he took pleasure in the calamities and sufferings of his Creatures. Whereas nothing is intended, but our true reformation and freedom from sin. We are to remember, that Innocence, Purity, Ingenuity and Simplicity, Heavenly-mindedness and Cha-

Vid. Alcibiad. Plat.

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Charity, are the Sacrifices most agreeable to the Deity.

3. SUCH is the distance of our Nature from Heaven, and the employment of that State, that we must do violence to our corrupt inclinations, before we can act our part, *among the Spirits of just men made perfect*; we must become meet partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in light. Sin (though pardoned) yet if it is not extirpated, must sink us unto Hell. It is in its nature most opposite unto God, *i. e.* to his Wisdom, Goodness and Power: because it carries along with it all the lineaments of baseness, weakness and malice. This should make us hate all those Principles in Religion, that make the *way broad*, that our Saviour hath pronounced *strait*. All those Doctrines and Opinions that seem to promote licentiousness, folly and wickedness; *if the light that is in thee be* Matthew. *darkness, how great is that darkness?* but when corrupt Nature, and corrupt Principles are combin'd together, there is no hope of our recovery; and we are carried headlong into all folly and misery.

2. LET

2. LET us enquire wherein the Characters of the Divine Nature appear. God is the first and original beauty; and true Religion is but a Transcript of his Nature. And,

1. IT carries the Lineaments of his Power and Victory. True Religion is a Confederacy with the Almighty. *We can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth us. The Lord is my strength (saith David) my rock and my fortress, my deliverer, my God, in whom I will trust: My buckler, the horn of my salvation, and my high tower.* His Power is visible in our conquests over sin; we must prove our selves to be the Sons of God, by our triumphs and victories over the World: because he that is in us, is greater than he that is in the World.

THE ravishing beauty of the Divine Nature, shines in the conversations of the righteous. For all round about them *see their good works, and glorify their father which is in heaven. They are blameless and harmless without re- buke,*

1 Phil. 2.
15.

bake, in the midst of a crooked and perverse Nation.

THE Purity of the Divine Nature is copied in the life of a Christian: pure and undefil'd Religion flies from all filthiness and hypocrisie, by a divine instinct and sensation. The Scripture seems to search for all Metaphors, to represent unto us the filthiness of sin. † The † Rom. 3: Rottenness of the Grave, the * vomit of † 13. Dogs, the Poyson of Vipers, the Filthiness of Swine, are some of the expressions that point unto us the odious Nature of sin. But God is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity. And the Wisdom that is from above, is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easie to be intreated, full of mercy, and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisie. 20. 2 Pet. 2.

THE Wisdom of God is no less seen in the lives of good men. True Religion is the knowledge of the most excellent Truths, the contemplation of the most glorious objects, and the practice of such duties as are most serviceable to our happiness. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of Wisdom. The Children of

of this World are said to be wiser in their own generation, than the Children of Light; i. e. they are more skilful to manage worldly affairs. But in the true estimate of things, they are fools in the strictest sense. The truly Religious, is the only Wise Man; he alone improves his Reason to the best advantage: for he looks to things future, as well as to the things present; he prefers great things to small things; and chooses the strictest Means to attain his ends; this is to be wise unto salvation.

WE are taught by the Christian Religion to imitate the Divine Goodness, his unenvious Bounty, his unconstrain'd
 Matth. 5. *Liberality. Love your enemies; bless*
 44. 45. 46. *them that curse you, do good to them that hate you; and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you; that you may be the Children of your Father which is in Heaven: for he maketh his Sun to rise on the evil, and on the good; and sendeth rain on the just and unjust.*

GREATNESS of Spirit is a branch of the Divine Nature; and the Christian is great in his Victories, Expectations

tions and Behaviour; nothing mean and sordid, in the behaviour of the true Sons of God: *they are heirs of God, and co-heirs with Christ, and therefore must needs have the world under their feet.*

FROM what I have said, we may easily learn, That there is nothing so amiable as true Religion. Nothing else resembles the Divine Nature, *He that is* 1 John.
born of God, committeth no sin; he that committeth sin is of the Devil; and the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the Devil. The Text that I have hitherto discours'd of, is the abridgement of the Gospel. Let us remember our miserable condition by Nature, and enquire what effectual remedies there may be to knock off our fetters, to procure unto us the *Liberty of the Sons of God*, to restore us to his Image, and how glorious our Victory must make us, when we are made partakers of the Divine Nature; when we live in a purer Air, and feed our Souls with the prospect of Immortality; when we are got above the Enchantments of Sense; when by our comfortable experience we taste and see that God is good; and

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and in the meditation of such things,
*let us commit our souls unto him, as into
 the hands of a faithful Creator.*

*To God the Father, Son and
 Holy Ghost, be all Glory,
 Power and Dominion, for
 ever. Amen.*

A
S E R M O N

Preach'd before the
Bishop *and* Synod
April 1887. in S. Giles's
Church *Edinburgh* :

O N
CANTICLES IV. V. 15.

*A Fountain of Gardens, a Well of Li-
ving Waters, and Streams from
Lebanon.*

THE *Song of Solomon*, that is,
the most Elegant and Divine
Composure of all his Poems,
the Song of Songs, by an usual
Hebraism, the most Excellent and Sera-
phick

phick Poem of all that Solomon ever wrote, and deserves to be so called, as *Grotius* hath it, *ob multas elegantias quæ in alium sermonem translatae non idem sapiunt*, they are like Aromatick Spirits that cannot so easily be conveyed from one vessel to another.

'Tis in its kind a *Dramatic Poem*, full of art and delicious harmony, that under the Chast and Sacred Metaphor of Marriage, sets off the Love of *Christ* to his Church, in the most ravishing strains and flourishes. And this is laid down as the first foundation of expounding this Book, by the best Interpreters both Antient and Modern: and the Jews themselves most unanimously conclude, that it hath an immediate reference to the glories and felicities of the *Messias*; and this Metaphor of Marriage, to express the *Mystical Union of Christ to his Church*, is frequent in the Writings of the Prophets. *Hosea 2. 19. I will betroth thee unto me for ever, yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness and in judgment.* And it is no less usual to the Apostles, when we look into the New Testament, *Ephes. 5. and 32. This is a great*

great Myserie, but I speak concerning Christ and his Church. 2 Cor. 11. and 2. I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste Virgin to Christ. Revel. 19. 7. and 9. For the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his Wife hath made her self ready, and to her was granted, that she should be arrayed in fine linnen, clean and white: for the fine linnen is the righteousness of the Saints.

Now when we apply to the Church the Characters of Beauty, and the Passions of Sacred Love, that are scattered up and down through this Book, we but follow and trace the footsteps of the Prophets and the Apostles. S. Bernard in his first Sermon on the Canticles, gives this Epitome of the Works of Solomon, that are extant. In the Book of the Proverbs, superfluous self love is banished; in the Book of Ecclesiastes, the vain love of the World is rejected: but, in Cantico Canticorum præscribitur castus Amor Dei; the whole Book being nothing else, but the strongest efforts of the Divine Love to be united in the closest Bonds to Christ our Head.

O

AND

AND this Chapter out of which I have read this Verse, breaths the same air, and is wholly taken up, in commending the incomparable Beauty of the *Spouse. Behold thou art fair my Love, behold thou art fair : i. e. thou art fair beyond thought or expression. And again, thou art all fair my Love, there is no spot in thee.* The fifteenth Verse is but the repetition of, or a further Paraphrase upon, the twelfth. *A Garden inclosed is my Sister, a Spring shut up, a Fountain sealed ; and here, a Fountain of Gardens, a Well of Living Waters, and Streams from Lebanon.* How fitly this gradation of Epithets becomes the Church, I shall endeavour to explain as I go forward.

Dilberus. Fons Hortorum, qui multis hortis rigandis sufficiat. And by those Waters, we are to understand, the pure and heavenly Doctrine of the Church, that waters the withered and parch'd Inhabitants of the Earth with its streams, without which they had been long e're now burnt up with the fire of Gods wrath and indignation. 'Tis usual with the Prophets to express the heavenly Oracles, under

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under the Notion of Dew, and Rain, and Living Waters. Deut. 32. & 2. *My Doctrine shall drop as the Rain, my speech shall distil as the Dew, as the small Rain upon the tender Herb, and as the Showers upon the Grass.* and our Saviour himself in his Conference with the Woman of Samaria, tells, that the Waters that he shall give, shall be in him to whom they are given, a Well of Waters, springing up unto eternal life. The highest pitch of temporal prosperity is expressed in Holy Scriptures by Dew. *God give thee of the Dew of Heaven, and Fatness of the Earth.* Isa. 35. 6. Gen. 27. 28, 29. And Psal. 133. and 3. *David compareth the Uniry of Brethren dwelling together in love, to the Dew of Hermon, and that which descended on the Mountains of Sion, as a token that there the Lord commanded his blessing;* and Prov. 10. & 12. the Kings favour is likened to Dew on the Grass. Hosea 14.

SINCE then, what is most excellent and desirable, is expressed by it, and that in the *Old and New Testament*, the Sacred Oracles are particularly signified by *Streams and Living Waters*, we offer no violence to the *Jewish Idiom*, and

Prophetical Phrase, when we expound this Verse, and its parallel places, of the Church under the *Messias*, especially diffusing the streams of their heavenly Oracles over the habitable World, and converting men from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan, to the living God. In speaking to these words, I shall confine my self to three particulars, following the natural order and position of the Words and Metaphors as they lye before us.

First, WE have the use of those Waters; a Fountain of Gardens.

Secondly, THE Purity of them, a Well of Living Waters.

Thirdly, THE first Rise and Origine of these Waters, they are Streams from Lebanon.

First, I SAY, We have the use of those Waters, Fons hortorum, a Fountain of Gardens, so conveniently situated in the middle, that by its Conduits and Canals, it may water and refresh the neighbouring Gardens, The Church looks with

with tenderness and compassion, on the right, and on the left hand; as our *Saviour* looked upon *Jerusalem* before her approaching ruine, and says in his very words, *How often would I have gathered you?* *She* wisely and discreetly distributes the Waters of Life to the necessities of all; the contrite and humble, *she* raises from the dust, by consolations and the precious Promises; the incorrigible and stubborn, *She* casts down by Thunder and Lightning, by words of terror and indignation. *She* comforts the fearful, warns the slothful, and applies her self to the spiritual necessities of all. *For her weapons are not carnal, but mighty through God, for pulling down strong holds, and lofty imaginations, and leading our thoughts captive to the obedience of Jesus.*

I WOULD not pass over this first Metaphor transiently, but let us examine its design, and we shall find it may naturally imply, either First, The Beauty of its Situation; or, Secondly, The abundance of its Furniture; or, Thirdly, The Strength of its Inclosure; or, Fourthly, The Propriety of its Owner. 'Tis *Fons signatus*, a Fountain sealed, *the chaste*

Spouse of Jesus Christ, married and sealed by his Spirit.

First, I SAY, this Metaphor implies, the Beauty of its Situation, so plac'd, that it might water the neighbouring Gardens and Inclosures, that the Rivulets derived thence, might moisten and fructifie all quarters of its dependance. Our Saviour says to his Apostles, you are the Light of the World, and a City set upon an hill cannot be hid. Isa. 5. 1. The Church is said to be a Vineyard on a very fruitful Hill; and this is the Hill (saith the Psalmist) Psal. 68. 16, which God desireth to dwell in, yea, the Lord will dwell in it for ever. They then that are set on the Towers of Sion, must look on all hands to defend the place from the assaults of the enemy. The Church to the Earth, is like the Sun in the Firmament, though sometimes darkned with Vapours, Clouds and Exhalations; yet its Beams break through the thick darkness, and illuminates South and North, East and West. Our Religion is light, and nothing more evident and plain, than the light; and though we cannot give perhaps a Metaphysical account of its nature,

nature, yet we all know what it is; we feel the Warmth and Beauty of it: we are not then to make this Doctrine obscure or abstruse with human inventions, or Comments and Glosses superinduced by Fancy, Vanities, or worldly Designs; nor are we to keep it up from People, but to let the Streams of those Waters run so seasonably and plentifully, for the edification of all our Masters household. The Doctrine is in it self plain, We need not say; *Who shall ascend into the Heavens to bring it down, or descend into the Depth, to bring it from thence; for it is near thee, and in thy mouth?* Romans.

BY *the Fountain* then, I understand the *Organic Church*, plac'd as it were in the midst of the World, and set upon a Hill. And since we are advanc'd to this height, we must breath in a purer Air, than the seculent Vapours of the lower Regions. Our Souls must fly higher, and mount nearer the Sun, than the Birds of darkness and Sensuality. We are obliged to converse with the rest of Mankind, as the Messengers of God, who design to gain them from their sin and danger, that when the great

Shepherd comes, we may be found having our loins girt, each at his own Post moving in his own Sphere; and then shall we appear as Workmen that need not be ashamed, as neither having violated nor betrayed that Sacred *Depositum* committed to our care.

Secondly, **THIS** Metaphor implies the abundance of its furniture; there is in this Fountain of the Holy Scriptures, *Scaturigo perennis aquarum*. Mat. 13. 52. *The Scribe instructed unto the Kingdom of Heaven, bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old.* When our Saviour design'd to propagate his Church among the Gentiles, he opened the Store-houses of Heaven upon the day of *Pentecost*, by which the *Apostles* were inflamed with Divine Eloquence and Zeal, to assert and defend the Mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven. 1 Cor. 12. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11. *To one is given by the Spirit the Word of Wisdom, to another the Word of Knowledge by the same Spirit, to another Faith by the same Spirit, to another the Gifts of healing by the same Spirit.*

WHEN

WHEN we consider the Necessities of the Church, those Gifts must needs be multiplied in proportion to the spiritual Diseases and Exigencies of Mens Souls; the first Ages of the Church required the miraculous Gift of Languages, Miracles and Healings: and the latter Ages; no less Devotion, Care and Humility, the Gifts that are proper for edification and establishment of the People in *their most holy Faith.*

WHEN to this we add, the Nature of our heavenly employment. It is not a little trifling Skill, that qualifies Men for this undertaking: Our Function is conversant in the highest Mysteries, and such as are of the highest consequence; does it not require the best of Moral Preparations, the strongest intellectual Furniture, all the Accomplishments of Nature, Grace and Education?

WE must form the Minds of Men unto a higher Discipline, than Humane Arts and Sciences; we must leave no Stone unturned to reform the World, we must dig hard in the Spiritual Mines of
the

the Holy Scriptures for *knowledge*, as for *Silver*, and search for her, as for *hid treasures*.

How delicate and curious a piece of work it is, to frame the Souls of Men into right Principles, solid and clear Notions, to recover them from darkness to light, to be employed in watching over the *Church*, that God bought with his own blood, how noble an employment is this? The Son of God incarnate was the first of our *Order*, the Founder of our *Society*. When we consider how various are the Spiritual necessities of the *Church*, the ignorances, mistakes and negligences of the *People*, the Arts, Sophistry and Wiles of the Devil, nothing but an inexhaustible Fountain, can supply its wants.

AND therefore the *People* should consider our Character as the most difficult and most Sacred, it requires the closest application of Mind, the most accurate Meditation, the most indefatigable Attendance, to instruct the ignorant, to convert the sinner, to settle the doubtful, to confirm the wavering, to rouse
up

up the negligent, to awaken the impenitent, to open to all men the Doctrine of Christianity; and in a word, to lead our People by Vertue, Patience and Piety, through the intricate Stages of this troublesome life, till they are put beyond danger and temptation.

ONE thus engaged, had need to be furnished with a grave, serious and steady temper of mind. *Who can think himself sufficient for these things?* Would not he need to have the illumination of an Angel, the compassion of a Father. Would not he need the Wisdom, Constancy, Resolution and Courage of the greatest Soul, whom no Storm, no Tempest, must drive from the Helm.

OUR *Saviour* foreseeing what Combinations would muster against the Church, what Legions of darkness would endeavour to shake its Faith, and disturb its Unity, did furnish his peculiar Servants, that wore his Livery, with such Gifts and Graces as might defend the Church, propagate the Faith, and repel the force of Errors to the end of the World. When he ascended up on high,
he

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he led Captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. He made the *illiterate Gallileans* baffle the Infidelity of the *Jews*, confound the *Philosophy* of the *Athenians*, and expose the Worship of *Demons*. The Donatives that he scattered amongst his followers, overcame the little Reasonings and Sophistry of Carnal Wisdom, and made both *Jew* and *Gentile* stoop to receive the Yoke of the *Crucified Messias*. The Prophecy of *Joel* was fulfilled, and his Spirit powred out on all flesh, in such plentiful effusions; that it broke down all opposition, it carried all before it, and defied all obstacles that were invented by human Counsel; and though this be meant in its most eminent sense of the Apostolical Age, yet the same Spirit supplies the *Church* in all Ages out of the same fulness. But,

Thirdly, IN this Metaphor is implied the strength of its Inclosure. The *Church* is a Society formed and combined by Spiritual Laws and Ligaments: for *Jerusalem is a City that is compact together.* Psal. 122. Accordingly the *Psalmist* prays, *Peace be within thy Walls, and Prosperity within thy Palaces.* The
Church

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Church is a foreign Colony, a Kingdom not of this World, fortified with Spiritual Power, Laws and Arguments, to overawe the Consciences of Men, to reclaim the stubborn, to establish the Authority of *Jesus*, by the Promises and Threatnings of an Invisible Kingdom: for his Kingdom is not of this World, it forms no designs against the Temporalities of *Princes*, it gives no disturbance to their Possessions; it lives in the profoundest peace, and the most absolute tranquillity.

AND until Ease, Luxury, Riches and Idleness had debauch'd the Morals and Intellectuals of the Western *Church*, there was no disturbance given to the *Powers of the Earth*; the *Church* indeed is a Society, but a Society whose Laws, Maxims and Methods are wholly different from Secular Policy. The Nature and Genius of our Religion abstracts Mens Minds from the World, and the Laws of it are Pure, Heavenly and Spiritual, and the natural tendency of them, is to alienate our affections from the Earth.

HAVE you observed any Society of Men under the Name of a *Church*, grasping

ing at Earthly Power, and by Secular Intrigues and Contrivances levelling all opposition, it is no more acted by the Spirit of Jesus. Yet notwithstanding of this Innocence, the *Church is a Fountain of Gardens*, a peculiar Inclosure, that neither *Wolves* nor *Bears* can break through, neither *Persecutors* nor *Hereticks* can destroy it; the *gates of Hell* cannot prevail against it; the *Storms* may indeed rise very high, but *Christ* is in the *Ship*, and he can reprove the *Winds* and *Storms*. Psal. 129. *Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth, may Israel say, yet have they not prevailed, the Plowers plowed upon my back, and made long their furrows.*

WHEN we remember, that the whole World lies in wickedness, and the Spirit that prevails most among Mankind, is opposite to the designs of the Gospel; what a Miracle of the Divine Goodness is it, that the Hedge of the Church is not quite broke down? And sometimes the violent attempts of the Kingdom of Darkness may so far prevail by the permission of God, as utterly to deface and ruine particular Churches. They have
all

all their Intervals, Eclipses, and several Periods of Light and Darknes: for no particular *Church* by any Promise, Grant or Privilege of our *Saviour*, is secured from a possibility of falling, by Error, Defection and Heresie; but the preservation of the *Church* is owing wholly to the Divine Arm; his Love, Care and Tenderness reaches the *Church* in all her conditions and members. *He shall feed his flock like a Shepherd, he shall gather the Lambs with his Arm, and carry them in his Bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.*

HIS Ambassadors must be such, as by their Seriousness, Gravity and Innocence, may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: we must resolutely encounter the hard Censures and Obloquies of a perverse World, and when we have done our utmost to oblige them to entertain the Gospel, and us for the Gospels sake, we may chance to be treated with all the marks of ignominy, contempt and disdain. If it be so difficult then to preserve the *Church*, and our own Reputation, from the attempts and malice of wicked men; I think in Prudence, Honour

Honour and Conscience, we ought to be very kind to the Reputation of one another. To bespatter ones Reputation, is the greatest wound you can give his Character, and it is all one whether you do it by a direct blow; or slantingly, by cunning and sly insinuations. Indeed we can do little by our selves to defend the inclosure of the Church; we are but weak and feeble, and the wickedness of Men makes us more and more so; yet if every one made his Brothers Reputation dear to him as his own, we might do very much to vindicate the Innocence, to extenuate the Infirmities, to remove the reproaches, that are Atheistically cast upon Men of *our Order*, and the Church might appear unto our enemies, to be in the language of the *Bridegroom*, Cant. 6. 4. *beautiful as Tirzah, and comely as Jerusalem, and terrible as an Army with banners.*

THE weakest things knit together, make a strong resistance; for though we fight not with carnal weapons, yet those we make use of, are mighty to break and shatter the Kingdom of Darkness, and all its retinue.

BUT

THIS Metaphor implies *Fourthly*, The Propriety of *Christ* in his *Spouse*. The *Church* is said in the twelfth Verse, to be *Fons signatus*, a *Fountain sealed*; She carries the visible Badge and Livery of her dearest *Lord and Redeemer*: She is the *chast Spouse of Jesus Christ*; hence you find, whenever the *Jews* made defection from the Worship of the true God, the *Prophets* did upbraid them with their going a whoring after their *Idols*. The *Church* is married unto him in *Truth and Righteousness*; his *Mystical Body* bought with his *Blood*; *Silver and Gold* could not redeem her; the *Love of Christ* to the *Church* is incomprehensible, the height, the breadth, and the depth of it, goes beyond our imaginations, and much more all our expressions. He loveth the gates of *Zion*; more than all the dwellings of *Jacob*; and *Psal.* 78. 68. He chused *Mount Zion* which he loved, he built his *Sanctuary* like the *Earth*, which he hath established for ever; his love to the *Church* is *prima regula amoris*, *Eph.* 5. 25. *Husbands love your Wives, even as Christ loved his Church, and gave himself for it.* The *Church* hath but one Husband,

band, one Mediator, one Sacrifice: the Purity, Value and Propitiation of which defends *her* for ever, against all the efforts and assaults of Hell. We see by what is said, that this Metaphor in its true intent, most naturally agrees to the Organick Church, established in the true Faith, and guarded with its true Pastors.

BUT I go forward to the second Particular that I promised to speak to; the Purity of these Waters; *the Church is a Well of Living Waters.* *Dilherus* renders it *Puteus aquæ viventis*, a deep Well, *non collectitiæ clausæ atque stagnantis, sed ultrò scaturientis*; that by its copious, frequent and uninterrupted ebullitions, waters all the neighbouring Regions: they are the only Waters can quench the Thirst of reasonable Souls: this is the Well after which they *pant* and *breath*. *As the Hart panteth after the Water-brooks, Psal. 42.*

HERE Interpreters take care to distinguish betwixt a Fountain and a Well. Every Well is a Fountain, but every Fountain is not a Well. So the Well implies

implies great *depth and profundity*; and this Phrase added to the former, does insinuate, that the Waters of the Sanctuary are not only pure, clear and serene, but very deep; they are not a puddle, nor a standing Lake; not like the Waters of *Gomorrha*, where Fishes cannot live; but the smooth and deep Rivers of *Paradise*.

THIS Metaphor then duly considered, does imply the Purity, Profundity and free Communication of these Oracles.

First, I SAY, the Purity of these Waters. The Church of Christ is not to be fed with Dreams, and Fancies, and corrupt Doctrines; not with noise, ostentation and popular tricks; but with Words of Eternal Life. 2 Tim. 1. 13. Hold fast the form of sound words which thou hast heard of me, in Faith and Love, which is in Christ Jesus. We are to take heed (1 Tim. 4. 16.) to our selves, and to our doctrine; for this is the way to save our selves, and them which hear us.

THE Hereticks of all Ages have been proud, and subtile, and indefatigable, and there is no Antidote against their Poyson, but to adhere to the Simplicity of the Gospel, the pure *Canon* of the Scriptures, the antient *Creeds* and *Liturgies* of the Church, the faith which was delivered to the Saints, the Doctrines that have been received *uno ore apud omnes Christianos*: the Golden Rule of *Vincentius Lirenensis*, *quod apud omnes, quod ubique, quod semper*. This is certainly the Rule of Faith, and by this Standard were the antient Heresies examined, baffled and confounded: Reason, Scripture and Universal Tradition, were the Weapons by which they defended the Truth. For the Apostle foretells, 2 Cor. 4. 2, 3. *That the time would quickly come, when men could not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts, they should heap teachers to themselves, and turn their ears from the truth, and follow after fables.* They did so in a little time, and the offspring of *Simon Magus* covered the Church, as the Frogs did Egypt. This occasioned the *Herefiologies* of *Irenæus*, *Epiphanius*, *S. Augustine*: Many forsook the Simplicity

city of Faith, and mixt the Waters of Life, with the putrid Streams that they drew from their own Cisterns.

THE *Credenda* of our Religion are but very few, and the Constitution of Human Nature did require, that they should be few. For since our *Saviour* did calculate his Religion, not for any particular Sect or Party, but for the whole Body of Mankind, it cannot be thought, that he design'd that it should be spun out into Nice Decisions, *Metaphysical* Distinctions, odd and Barbarous Words. When the School Divinity began to be the Learning of the *Western Church*, and *Aristotle's Philosophy* gave Laws to their *Theology*, how miserably was the Christian Religion mangled and broken into airy Questions, uncertain Conclusions and idle Problems, that eat out the Life of true Learning and Devotion? And Articles imposed on the Belief of the *Church*, neither necessary in their Nature, nor revealed by *Christ*, nor taught by the *Apostles*, nor founded in Reason, nor consisting with the Analogy of Faith. The Christian Religion thus rarified unto nothing, became feeble and

Pope Pius IV. his Creed.

dry, lost its force and primitive vigour. And the truth is, since the Thirteenth Century, in which that kind of Learning domineered in all Schools, Colleges and Monasteries; all Discourses, even the Homilies that exhort the People to Repentance and a Holy Life, were all blended with that *bombast Fargon*. But our Religion was first plainly delivered, and loves perspicuity, and fixes its residence in the most ingenuous Souls; and if it be covered and mantled in darkness, who can distinguish it from Non-sense and Vanity?

AND therefore since *Christ* by us conveys these Waters to his Church, let us not sully them with *Chimerical* Guesses and Uncertainties, but let us pour them out in their original Purity and Simplicity, without alteration, corruption or addition. How often doth the *Apostle* exhort to this? 2 Tim. 7. 8. *In doctrine shewing uncorruptedness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech that cannot be condemned.* And Titus 1. 9. *holding fast the faithful word, as thou hast been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convince gainsayers.*

AND

AND this is not done by Passion or reviling Language ; for where did you ever hear , that a man was recovered from Heresie or Schism, by heaping reproaches upon him ? Our Arguments may be intrinsically strong, but if they are set off with venom , rancour and personal aspersions, they may well irritate the Disease, but they shall never reclaim the Erroneous ; and therefore when we deal with any such, either on the right or left hand, let us state the Controversies fairly ; else we but *beat the Air* ; neither must we multiply them needlessly ; nor are we to toss and bandy those Questions to serve the designs of Fame, Ostentation of Learning, or Popularity ; but with a sincere resolution to edifie the Church, to fight under the *Royal Standard of Christ*, to preserve his Church, his chaste and dearly beloved Spouse.

Secondly , THIS Metaphor implies the profound Nature of Gospel Mysteries : 'tis *puteus profundus aquæ viventis*. The Woman of Samaria said to our Saviour of Jacobs Well, that it was very deep , *φεῖας βάθυ*, how much more

Rom. II.
33.

more profound are the Wells of Salvation ? The Mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, the deep things of God, the Mysteries kept hid from Ages and Generations. *Great is the Myserie of Godliness, God manifested in the Flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of Angels, believed on in the the World, received up into Glory.* We are taught by the Gospel to speak the Wisdom of God in a Myserie. The illuminated *Apostle* of the *Gentiles* in contemplation of these Mysteries, fell in a transport of admiration. *O the depth of the Wisdom and Knowledge of God, how unsearchable are his Judgments, and his Ways past finding out !*

THOUGH there be nothing in the Gospel that overthrows Reason, or subverts its Principles, yet its *Mysteries* and *Revelations* are beyond it. The whole Contrivance of our Redemption is a *Myserie* ; and then certainly we ought to approach the administrations of his House with pure hearts and clean hands. Let us *wash our hands in innocence, when we compass his Altar.* They were to look to their feet that came to the Temple of *Jerusalem* ; much more should

should the Sons of *Aaron*, the immediate Servants of the Sanctuary, prove the keenest enemies to all prophanation of holy things. I am no friend to Superstition, and as little to Giddiness and Enthusiasm.

THEY that acknowledge no Mysteries in the Gospel, despise its Original and Divinity, and by consequence they trample on the *Priesthood* also; and therefore the followers of *Socinus* on this account are odious, that they have forsaken the Belief of all Ages, and what was received in the *Christian Churches* since the first Plantations of Christianity, they have stript our Religion naked of its Mysteries, and made the Holy Scriptures to bend and bow to that *Scheme* and *Model* that they have formed in their own fancies.

AND then again, if this *Well be so deep*, we can neither furnish our selves nor others with these Waters of Life, without earnest Prayer, profound Meditation and great Humility, a serious and close application of Spirit. So *S. Paul* advises *Timothy*, *Be in those things*;

things; and it is an Apostolick Precept, Give thy self to Reading.

CAN we think to beat down the Counter-batteries of Hell, by carelesness and negligence, ignorance or inadvertence. Men will not resign their Reason without the best Arguments duly applied, and the Mines of the Holy Scriptures, are not only rich, but very deep, we should dig in them night and day. It was the great Commendation of *A-pollos*, that he was mighty in the Holy Scriptures.

BUT I go forward to the third Thing that I think implied in this Metaphor, and that is, the freedom, unconstrain'd activity, force and strength of their ebullitions. 'Tis a Well of Living Waters which cannot be contained in one place, but must burst forth to water the Hills and Valleys, high and low, rich and poor. When we remember what a World we live in, how refractory and stubborn to the *Toke of Jesus*, we must not be niggardly of our Instructions, we must reprove, rebuke, exhort, in season, and out of season, with all long-suffering, and doctrine;

doctrina; here a little, and there a little, *agitar de summa rei*; and there are no measures to be set to our endeavours, but the measures of Charity. It was said of the ancient Christians upon that Monument rais'd to the Memory of Diocletian, that *Superstitionem suam generi humano inculcarent*, they did embrace all occasions to make men acquainted with the truth and excellency of our Religion.

INDEED we should let our selves to do this with the greater readiness, when we consider the opposition that we are like to encounter, either First, From the Malice of Satan; or Secondly, From our own Weaknesses and Infirmities; or Thirdly, From the Perverseness, Hard-heartedness and Incredulity of them, to whom the Gospel is preached.

First, I SAY, from the Malice of Satan. When the Gospel began first to be proclaimed to the Nations, the Powers of Hell did swell with fury and indignation; they began with all spite and rage, to crush the very beginnings of it; he gathered together all the Forces and
Legions

Psalm 2.

Legions of Darkness, to consult, how *the growing Religion of Jesus might be stopped*. But the *Apostles* fortified themselves in the words of the *Prophetic Psalm*, *Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things?* It is the Devils very Nature to retard the Gospel; 'tis he that inspires Hereticks; casts stumbling blocks in our way, and finds out a thousand methods to stop our progress. 1 Theff. 2. 18. *We would have come unto you once and again, but Satan hindered us:* and his endeavours in a peculiar manner, are levelled against the *Clergy*, who are most terrible to his Kingdom, and beat down his strong holds and retirements in the Consciences of Men.

Isaiah.

Secondly, We are hindered by our own Weaknesses and Infirmities: When we see so little success of our labours, we are like to grow faint, and give over, and say with the Prophet, *Lord who hath believed our report?* 'Tis true, *We have this treasure in earthen vessels;* and these Vessels are brittle and soon shattered; and when we would vigorously and zealously serve our God; we are dragged down again to the Earth, by this dull and
lumpish

lumpish Body that we carry about; we cannot shake off human Passions; Affections and Infirmities; we are not priviledg'd to run his Errands so nimbly as the Angels do; we are apt to despond, and to suffer the flesh, and its lazy whispers overcome our quickest motions, and most zealous resolutions. Oh! then to be within the *Holy of Holies*, where the brightness of his face, and the light of his Countenance can never suffer us to grow weary, fullen and melancholy in his Service. We shall minister before his Altar in the Sacrifices of Praise; and *Hallelujahs* without fainting, interruption or slumber.

BUT *Thirdly*, We are oppos'd by the perverseness incredulity and ingratitude of the World. When we contemplate the Arguments and Nature of our Religion, we would think that they are so strong, that no Soul could resist them; but when we come abroad into the World, and endeavour to reason men out of their folly and wickedness, how hard is this undertaking? How many Sermons are lost upon the inconsiderate multitude? We must after many years en-

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endeavours, sit down with sorrow, and complain of their incurable madness.

THEY have hardened themselves against all reproof; we must make our approaches to their hearts, and cut out our way through Rocks and Iron Bars, and inveterate Prejudices; they have fence'd themselves against our serious exhortations, and stopped their ears like the deaf Adder, when we have charmed never so wisely and affectionately.

HAD we nothing else to do, but to let men see the reasonableness and excellency of the Christian Religion, the folly and danger of Sin and Vice, then our work had been *easy*, as indeed it is *honourable*: but we find to our sad experience, that when we have chased them from one Cavil to another, when we have shamed them out of all their denials and exceptions, they still keep their hold, in defiance of all our Remonstrances.

2 Cor. 4. 4. The *God* of this World hath blinded the minds of men, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ (who is the Image

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Image of God) *should shine unto them.*
How hard is it to recover the World from Sensuality and Error ? How difficult to make them love the Precepts of our Saviour, and the Doctrine of the Cross ? To deny themselves, and crucifie the flesh, to forgive injuries; to bless them that curse us ; to despise the World and all its trifling interest ? This is the aim of our Religion, and this is it which men are loth to practise ; this ought to provoke our Zeal to the highest flame, and make us set our faces against the stream and current of wicked practices, against all immoralities and errors.

THE Church, like some Aromatick Spices, the more you press them, the more fragrant they smell: their *effluvia*, fly on all hands, and their Smell perfumes the Air. The more we are besieged, the more the Gospel takes Air, like those precious Spices, mentioned in the Verse before my Text: so skilfully plac'd, and *Diliberus.* so orderly disposed, that by their Order, *suaviorem reddant odorem.* So the Prince of Poets in his *Pastorals*,

Sic

Virg. Sic posita quoniam suaves miscetis odores.

And this is prophesied of the *Messias*, that his *Garments* should smell of *Myrrhe, Aloes and Cassia*. And from him the Church hath all those excellent Smells, mentioned *Verse 14. Saffron, Calamus and Cinnamon*; to teach us, that though the Gifts of the Spirit are, and have all their several excellencies; yet they are all useful to the Church, whose garments are made of needle work, and different colours; and therefore it is an unpardonable vanity in the People, to make saucy comparisons between the Gifts of *Ecclesiasticks*; for, *stabit unus quisque sorte sua*; and the Philosophy of *S. Paul* to the *Corinthians*, should teach them more modesty. If the foot shall say, because I am not the Eye, I am not of the Body; is it therefore not of the Body? If we look up to our Superiours for assistance, conduct and direction, they must look down to us for obedience, deference and submission.

THE third Thing that I promised, was the rise of those Waters, they come from

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from Mount *Libanus*, by an impetuous force and vigour. Nothing can more lively represent the first rise and beginning of those heavenly Oracles. The Gospel is the *day star from on high*, and the Doctrine that our *Saviour* hath revealed, is from Heaven. We are told by * *Historians*, that at the foot of Mount *Libanus*, there arises a pleasant Fountain, *aquas habens limpidissimas*, that run down from it, through subterraneous passages most impetuously, and there burst forth in great plenty, and by several Conduits, waters all the Gardens of the Plain. And this leads us naturally to the Divinity of our Religion; but here I stop, being afraid that I have transgress'd already the time that was allowed me.

* *Jacob. Visriac. apud Carolum. Maria. Du Viel.*

*To God the Father, Son and
Holy Ghost, be Glory, for
ever. Amen.*

Q

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S E R M O N
O N

R O M. xii. 1.

I beseech you therefore, Brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your Bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

THE *Apostle* in the former part of this Epistle, asserted the Doctrine of Evangelical Justification against the unbelieving Jews, who stuck so tenaciously to the System of Moses's Laws. And now he

Q 2

sums

sums up in one pathetic Exhortation, the strength and design of the Gospel, and of all Religion. Christianity was not a Collection of dry and airy Notions, calculated to amuse the World; but a Discipline, the highest and the purest, that ever was received amongst men: the immediate Revelation of Infinite Wisdom, which brought along with it *true and everlasting righteousness*. And therefore they ought not to let their thoughts dwell so much, and so long on the glory of their Temple, and the variety of their Sacrifices under the Levitical Oeconomy. They were now invited to offer unto God more valuable Oblations, than any of their former. They were to bring themselves to the Altar of God, and resign their Will to his Will. And this was more agreeable to the nature of true Religion, the design of the Gospel, and the highest exercise of Reason. When we bring unto God only things that are without us, we mistake his Nature, and despise his Goodness. Reason taught us, that the best things are to be offered unto God; and therefore the Heart and Soul, and Mind of Man, are the only Sacrifices that are truly valuable.

And

Dan.

Non donum, sed donantis animus.

And this is the reason why the Apostle addresses to the Christians at *Rome*, with so much zeal and affection.

I will shortly, consider, 1. His Preface. 2. His Exhortation. And 3. The Motive to enforce it. And

1. For the Preface, *By the mercies of God*. We easily infer from the fervour and solemnity of the Apostles Introduction, the weight and importance of his Exhortation : *i. e.* I do beseech you with all the earnest passion and true tenderness that I am capable of : *I exhort you by the Mercies of God ; i. e.* by what is uppermost in his Nature, his boundless Compassions, that are in the front of all his glorious Perfections, and in the Language of the *Psalmist*, *from everlasting to everlasting* : *Psalm. 136.* by all that is great, sacred and venerable, that which takes up the wonder of Angels, the praises of men, and the adorations of the Saints in glory ; that you no longer resist the Light of the Gospel ; but since you are redeem'd from the pompous drudgery of an external Religion ; that you would think no Sacrifices worthy of God, but

such as are attended with your life, strength, zeal and devotion : for this is the true Worship of the *New Testament*, when our Will is united to the Will of God.

'Tis easie to observe the holy Violence and Fire of *S. Paul's Spirit*, when he endeavours to plant true and solid Religion. Here he speaks, as if his Soul was ready to crack the strings that ty'd it to his Body. He is all flame, all love, all endeavour, all charity; He wishes himself an *Anathema*, *i. e.* a publick Sacrifice for the unbelieving *Jews*, if this could recover them from their Infidelity, to the acknowledgement of the Truth as it is in *Jesus*.

Rom. 9. 3.

HE made use of this weighty Argument in this place, because there is none of greater force. If the Angels were to preach to us, and gain us to the belief of the Gospel, they could not fly higher in their Perswasives, than the *Mercies of God*. It is by *them* that he chuses to proclaim all his Titles of Honour to the World, *The Lord, the Lord God, slow to anger, and of great goodness*. So when

Exod.

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when the Apostle exhorts by the *Mercies of God*, he exhorts by God himself, and all those ineffable appearances of his Goodness, that are felt by the intelligent World, and every moment proclaim'd with wonder and acknowledgement.

How merciful must he be, who suffers without present revenge, the many horrid Crimes that are daily committed, the provocations that fly in the face of Heaven, their multitude, their variety and their circumstances; *as if men would pull down the Almighty from his Throne,* Psal. 14. 2, 3, 4. and reverse the foundations of good and evil! And yet such is the love of God to mankind, that after many unkind denials, and rude affronts, he besieges the Consciences of men, by the force of his Convictions; he makes the Light of his Word to pierce to the bottom of the Soul, and powerfully overcome the stubbornness of our Will. How wisely does he conduct us through the labyrinth of temptations! How sweetly does he engage us by the motions of his Spirit! How kindly does he receive the *Prodigal*, when Luke 15, as yet he had but some small beginnings

The Seventh Sermon.

of wisdom, sobriety, and calmness! *He saw him afar off, he ran to him, fell upon his neck, and kissed him.*

WHEN we remember that the *Mercies of God*, are our surest Refuge and Sanctuary in all our fears, straits, and difficulties, we need say no more to amplify them. This is the strong Hold that we flee to, when we are assaulted by fear, despair, or the terrour of the Law.

WHEN *Nathan* the Prophet, by a witty Parable, forc'd open the Conscience of *David*, when the terrours of God began to take hold of him, he immediately ran to the horns of this Altar;

Psal. 51. 1. According to the multitude of thy tender mercies, blot out my sins and my transgressions. This is the argument, which God himself cannot resist. See with what zeal and holy Rapture it is pleaded by *Daniel*, in behalf of the Captives

Dan. 9. 19. of Babylon. O Lord hear, O Lord forgive, O Lord hearken and do, defer not for thine own sake, O! my God, for thy City, and thy people are call'd by thy Name.

Now

NOW we may easily guess, what stress the Apostle laid upon this Argument, like a skilful Orator, he reserves his strongest motives for the last Place; that by one stroke he might batter down all Objections. He had sufficiently reasoned the case in the former Chapters, and now he pleads that his Reasonings may not be in vain; that they may not resist so much Light and Authority; but rather that they ought to give way to their own Convictions, and the true designs of Christianity; and yield up themselves an entire Victim to the Will of God.

IT is usual with the Apostle, when he recommends those comprehensive Duties, that have in them the Soul, and strength of Christianity, to enforce them by this Argument. *If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of Love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels of mercies, &c.* But shortly, the reasons why the Apostle pitch'd upon this Argument are these.

Phil. 2. 1.

I. BE-

I. BECAUSE the contempt of God's mercies is attended with the sharpest, and the saddest marks of his displeasure and indignation. And this is just in its self, if we consider that we have nothing to say on our own behalf, when we trample upon his Love and Mercy. So argues the Author to the *Hebrews*,

Heb. 2. 3. *How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him. And again,*

—Chap. 10. 28, 29. *He that despised Moses Law, died without mercy, under two or three witnesses; of how much sorer punishment, suppose, ye shall he be thought worthy, that hath trodden under foot the blood of the Son of God. The contempt of his Love and Mercy, manifested in the Gospel, is the most inexcusable folly and madness; This*

Joh. 3. 19. *is the condemnation that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light. This is the Vinegar, and Gall, that fill the Souls of the damn'd with self-horror, confusion and indignation. This is the thought, that eternally disquiets the dark Habitations below, viz. that once they might have been*

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been sav'd, that once they had their day, and that they refus'd the Light when it shin'd. No Tortures so exquisite as the lashes of an inrag'd Conscience. The Light that they despis'd whilst they were here, looks them broad in the face, and makes them roar to all Eternity. And these accusations of the Soul against it self, the upbraidings, and inward whips of the Mind, make up the miseries of an *intellectual Being*.

2. THE Apostle made choice of this Argument, from the *Mercies of God*, in this place, when he summ'd up the whole Christian practice into one Exhortation: because his Mercies in the Gospel are his last remedy for our Recovery. Upon other occasions the Apostle moves men to their duty, by the consideration of his Power. So he exhorts the *Corinthians*, *Knowing therefore the terrour of the Lord we persuade Men*. But there are other Arguments to move us, when those from his Power and Sovereignty are us'd. If we sin against his Dominion and Power, we fly to his Mercy; but when we sin against his Mercy, there is not another Attribute in God, to which

Cor.

Luke 27.
13.

which we can fly ; his Mercy is the last remedy for the recovery of Mankind. This is decipher'd excellently in that Parable of the Gospel; the Master of the Vineyard when all his former Servants, and Messengers had been baffled, and abus'd, resolves at last to *send his beloved Son*; *It may be* (said he) *they will reverence him when they see him*: and if they did not, the patience and goodness of God was no longer to struggle with them. If we reflect a little on the weight and solemnity of this Preface, we may justly infer the consequence of that Exhortation, to which it is prefix'd, *I beseech you by the most sacred Mysteries of our Religion, I beseech you by all that is amiable, and delightful, by the mercies of God, that soften the most rugged dispositions, and melt the most obdur'd hearts, by that great Propitiation brought to light by the Gospel, that you would present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.*

AND this leads me to consider this Exhortation more particularly. The Apostle asserted formerly our freedom from

from the Levitical Sacrifices; and lest we should think, that by our Christian Liberty we are loos'd from all worship and obedience, he informs us here, what was the Sacrifice that was chiefly design'd under the Symbols, and Figures of the ancient Law, and indispensably requir'd under the Oeconomy of the Gospel. And tho *Interpreters* may vary in their Expressions, yet all of them must agree, that there is no more intended, than that the Christians, (instead of Beasts, and bloody Sacrifices) would offer up themselves, *i. e.* their Wills, Strength, and Affections, with purity and zeal to the service of God. † The † *of quarta.* word in the Original, in several good Authors, signifies *persons*, *That ye present your bodies*, *i. e.* Your selves: for this, under the *New Testament*, is the only acceptable Sacrifice. This is the whole of the Christian Religion; this is the life, and design of the former Ceremonies; and this is the Abstract, and *Compend.* of all true Worship. And because this one truth, is of such vast consequence to the Souls of Men, and hath

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Lactant. Hic verus est cultus, in quo mens colentis, seipsam Deo victimam immaculatam sistit.

in it, the Spirit and Quintessence of all practical Devotion; I shall endeavour to recommend it, and give further light unto it in the following Method.

1. I WILL consider the excellency of this Sacrifice, abstractly, and in it self.

2. THE value that God did set upon it, when the Levitical Sacrifices were prescribed by the Law, and were most in vogue amongst the *Jews*.

3. THAT this Sacrifice was principally intended by all the care, caution and ceremony, wherewith all other Sacrifices were offered.

4. I WILL separately explain the Epithets by which this Sacrifice is recommended, with allusion to the old Sacrifices of the Law. And from all these particulars, we must necessarily conclude, that this is the Sacrifice that truly recommends us to God.

1. LET us view the excellency of this Sacrifice, and total surrender of our selves to his disposal. There is nothing

thing else suitable to the Divine Nature; it is not Gold, nor Frankincense, nor the costly Perfumes of *Arabia*, that propitiate the Deity; a Soul purified from vice and sin, is his peculiar Habitation. Nothing quenches the fire of true Devotion more, than wrong notions of Almighty God. The great reason why the Heathens were over-run with Idolatry and Superstition, was, because the Histories of their Gods were stuff'd with folly and wickedness; and they could not pretend to greater heights of Purity, than the Deities that they worshipped. To adore God, is to bestow upon him the highest Love, Veneration, and esteem of our Souls. His Eyes pierce to the secrets that are buried in darkness, and to the Centre of our Spirits; and if our Sacrifices are sullied, and defil'd in their first springs and principles, *they are an abomination unto him.* No Worship can be pleasing unto God, unless what is offer'd by Love. Pray, what do we take him to be, when we endeavour to put him off, with any thing less, than the flower and strength of our Reason? Thus our Saviour instructs the *Woman of Samaria* in the Nature

John 4.
23, 24.

John 4.
Psalm 50.
12, 13, 14.

Nature of true Worship; *but the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in Spirit and in Truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship him.* How gross must their apprehensions be, who think, that he is delighted with carnal Oblations, *for he is a Spirit, and must be worshipped in spirit and in truth.* *If I were hungry I would not tell thee, for the World is mine, and the fulness thereof. Will I eat the flesh of Bulls, or drink the blood of Goats; offer unto God thanksgiving, and pay thy vows unto the most High.*

Isa. 66. 1,
2, 3.

THE Philosophers discover'd the reasonableness of this Doctrine without Revelation; and the best of them undervalu'd outward services, and Sacrifices, in comparison of a chaste Mind, and a pure Soul. *Do ye think (saith Seneca) that God is pleas'd with many Sacrifices, and much Blood, high Temples, and magnificent Structures, nay rather, in suo cuique consecrandus est pectore.* The breast of a good Man is the most lovely Temple for the Divinity, the place of his peculiar residence and Habitation. And this is but the language of the Prophet *Isay* a little varied.

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varied. *Thus saith the Lord, the Heaven is my Throne, and the Earth is my footstool, where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest? For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the Lord: But to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word, He that killeth an Ox, is, as if he slew a man, &c.* The Sacrifices of Gods own institution were not regarded, unless they were subservient to this more excellent Oblation.

THIS Evangelical Sacrifice, is the only, and most proper mean to attain the true ends of Worship; freedom from sin, the favour of God, and peace of Conscience, are the great ends of all Religion; and these things are not attain'd by the most pompous shew and parade of Ceremonies, unless the Soul and Will be first sacrificed to his Obedience. *When ye come to appear before me, who hath requir'd this at your hand? to tread my Courts? bring no more vain Oblations, Incense is an abomination unto me, the new Moons, and Sabbaths, the calling of Assemblies, I cannot away with,*

Isa. l. vii.
16.

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it is iniquity even the solemn meeting. How loathsome in the eyes of God are all our publick services, when the Soul is left behind. *He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?*

Micah. 6.
6, 7, 8.

THIS is the Sacrifice that is peculiar to the *New Testament*, when we approach the Throne of God with filial confidence; like *Children of the free woman*; disengaged from the servile incumbrances, that held the *Jews* in bondage. When we offer our selves unto God with true alacrity, strong desires, and a mind purified from the World, and feculent adherences, that stick to us from the neighbourhood of sensible Objects: when we come with that masculine and chearful Devotion that becomes them that are set at liberty from the weak and dark shadows of the Law. By *St. Peter*, we are said to be a *spiritual Priesthood*, to offer up *spiritual Sacrifices*. And we are told by *S. Paul*, that we have access to the Throne, and liberty to cry, *Abba, Father*. And com-

commanded in our Prayers, to *lift up holy hands without wrath or doubting.* This is the Worship of the *new Testament*, the foundation of that ingenuous Converse, that is between us and Heaven. Therefore do we with so much elevation of spirit magnifie the goodness of God, that gave us his Son, *Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us Kings and Priests unto God and his Father, to him be glory, and dominion for ever, and ever, Amen.* Rev. 1. 5.

THIS is true Evangelical Sacrifice, and it alone affords the most solid delight and satisfaction to the Votary. Outward Services, when they are separated from this inward dedication, have nothing in them but toil and bodily labour, we are told by the Author to the *Hebrews*, that the Jewish Religion did consist in *Meats, and Drinks, and divers Ordinances.* And we find in the Prophecy of *Amos*, that such of the *Jews* as did not see further than the letter of the Law, thought their attendance on the Temple-service the most intolerable weariness. But when we sacrifice our

Psalm 4.

*Res seve-
ra est ve-
rum gau-
dium.*

very Souls unto his obedience, his Presence fills our hearts with joy and gladness, the purest rapture and contentment. *Thou hast put more gladness in my heart, than in the time when their wine and their oil did increase.* True joy arises in the Soul from an Union with God; when the light of his Countenance shines upon us by its clear beams and irradiations, the clouds of darkness and disasters cannot approach us; we are then secure against fear and despondency, we feel our selves encircled in the arms of divine Love, and made strong against the assaults of anxiety. God is the source of all Felicity, and the nearer we draw unto him, the more happy we are, and rational happiness must be felt, and necessarily must dilate it self in all the faculties of the Soul. *A Conscience void of offence towards God, and towards Man, is a house built upon the Rock,* it may be *batter'd*, but it cannot be *shaken*. And God loves to pour into our hearts such degrees of joy, *when we are purified from all filthiness of the flesh and of the Spirit*; when we offer our selves without reserve to his service and obedience; when we sacrifice our hearts
unto

unto God ; when Charity consumes the Oblation, and true zeal inflames the Victim. *I had rather (said the Psalmist)* Psalm 119. *be one day in thy Courts, than a thousand elsewhere.* And again, *O ! How love I thy Law ! it is my meditation, night and day.* They are strangers to true Peace and satisfaction, that are unacquainted with the pure and unmixt pleasures of Religion,

2. LET us consider the value that God did set upon this spiritual Sacrifice, when the Levitical Sacrifices were in force. He always gave his People to understand by the Prophets, that the whole train of the Mosaick Ceremonies was design'd to signifie and advance this everlasting, and more spiritual Worship ; which was to continue, when the typical figures and shadows were gone. This is clear from that remarkable place in the Prophecies of Jeremiah, *For I* Jerem. 7. *spake not unto your Fathers, nor com-* 22. *manded them, in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning Burnt-Offerings, or Sacrifices ; but this thing commanded I them, saying, obey my Voice, and I will be your God, and ye*
R 3 *shall*

shall be my people. Strange! Did not God command the Sacrifices of the *Levitical Law*? Yes certainly: but with design to advance the purer Worship of the Mind. This is more precious than the most costly Offerings of the Temple. The *Widow's Mite* recorded in the Gospel, is one visible instance of it; 'tis prefer'd in the esteem of God, to all the Rich Donations of the *Scribes and Pharisees*: she came to the Treasury with a poor Purse and a Rich Soul; a Soul made cheerful with the Love of God, and in the simplicity of her heart, without ostentation or reserve, she offered all that she had.

How much God delighted in the Oblations of the Mind beyond the outward Sacrifices, appears in this, that he readily dispens'd with the Ceremony, when that other more valuable Sacrifice was brought. Two famous instances we have of this, *viz. David's eating the Shew-bread*; by which our Saviour confounded the Pharisees, who doted so much on the external part of their Religion. And the next is, *the manner of Hezekiah's celebrating the Passover*, though

though the people were not prepared, according to the method prescribed by the Law. Therefore it is a foolish Argument, that the *Jews* make use of against our *Saviour*; that he could not be the *Messias*, because he did abolish the Ceremonies of *Moses's* Law. For the *Levitical* Sacrifices did vanish of their own accord, when our *Saviour* rose from the dead, and gave place unto that Spiritual Worship, that was more agreeable to the Divine Nature, and the Spiritual Kingdom of the *Messias*. So our *Saviour* tells the *Woman of Samaria*. *We* Joh. 4. 21, man believe me, the hour cometh, when 22, 23, 24. ye shall neither in this Mountain, nor yet in *Jerusalem* worship the Father: but the hour cometh, and now is, when the true Worshipers shall worship the Father in Spirit and in Truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. From all this it is very evident, that not only in the time of the Patriarchs, but under the Law, this was only the Sacrifice that was valued by God.

3. LET us remember, that the exact care and caution wherewith they were

obliged to offer their Sacrifices under the Law, did signifie and promote this Spiritual Sacrifice of the *New Testament*. I do not here intend a just Discourse of the antient Sacrifices; yet we may be oblig'd to look back into the Books of *Moses*, to consider some particulars, that concern all Sacrifices in general.

AND, I. All Sacrifices were offered
 Lev. 2. 13. With Salt; *With all thine Offerings, thou shalt offer Salt.* This is cited in the
 Mar. 9. 49. *New Testament* by our Saviour. I must remember, that I ought not to amuse you with *Cabalistick* Fooleries; but it is certain from the Epistle to the *Galatians* and the *Hebrews*, that there was a sublime Moral couch'd and intended by the external *Scheme* of the Law. And therefore, though we are not able to trace it in all its Lines and Figures; yet we may safely venture, when we force the Law, to say nothing but what is agreeable to the great design of Religion, and the Morals of Christianity.

LET me return to consider this first step of their Caution in sacrificing. Salt
 hath

hath in it a twofold Vertue, 1. It preserves from Putrefaction. 2. It binds the parts together.

1. I SAY, it preserves from Putrefaction. The Sacrifices that are offered unto the pure and incorruptible Deity must resemble his Nature; the rottenness of hypocrisie, fraud and malice, must be banish'd from all his Sacrifices. *We have escaped the corruption, that is in the World through lust, being made partakers of the Divine Nature.* Thus are we exhorted to sincerity (opposite to corruption) by S. Peter; *Wherefore laying aside all malice, all guile and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, &c.* See with what complacency our Saviour speaks of Nathanael, *Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile.*

Joh. 1. 47.

2. SALT bindeth the parts together. We are forbidden to bring our Gifts to the Altar, until first we are reconcil'd to our Brother. We are directed by S. Paul, *to lift up holy hands, without wrath or doubting.* Our God is the God of Peace; our Religion is the Gospel of Peace; and the fruits of the Spirit are

Joy

Mat. 5. 23, 24, 25.

Joy and Peace; and the *wisdom that is from above is first pure, and then peaceable.* Such a temper and frame of Spirit, does well answer the Prophecies of *Isaiah*,
 Isa. 11. 6, 7, 8, 9. *That the Wolf should dwell with the Lamb; the Leopard and the Kid shall lye down together. And the Calf, and the young Lion, and the Fatling together, and a young Child shall lead them: i.e. the fierce and unruly passions of Humane Nature shall be conquer'd and subdu'd by the Laws of Jesus; every thing that is rugged and boistrous must be tam'd and smooth'd; for the Earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the Waters cover the Sea.* I might add to this, that Salt preserves the relish. And there-
 v. 9. fore the *Apostle* exhorts, *Let your speech be always with Grace, seasoned with Salt, that ye may know how to answer every man.* If this were notic'd, our tongues should be employed with greater Modesty, and less censorious, endeavouring to close, rather than widen the breaches in our neighbourhood.

Col. 4. 6. 2. ALL Sacrifices ought to be blameless, according to the Prescript of the Law. The Prophet *Malachi* upbraids the

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the people with the neglect of this, *If ye offer the lame and the sick, is it not evil? offer it now unto thy Governour, will he be pleas'd with thee, or accept thy person?* What we offer unto God, *who is of purer eyes, than that he can behold iniquity,* must be blameless and entire; *that ye may be blameless and harmless, the Sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse Nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the World.* We are to consider not only our inward frame, but also the outward Decorum of our behaviour in the place of his presence. Mat. 1. 8. Phil. 2. 15. Eccl. 5. 1.

3. ALL Sacrifices were to be offered without Leaven. *No meat offering which ye shall bring unto the Lord, shall be made with leaven.* And the New Testament commands us, *to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees. And to purge out the old leaven of Corruption.* Now leaven hath a twofold quality, it sows, and it swells, either, or both mays the Sacrifice; whether we grow sower with Malice, or swell with Pride and Vanity; as the Pharisees who blew their Trumpets, to convene the Spectators, rather than the Poor. You find this humour sharply re- Lev. 2. 11. Mat. 16. 6. 1 Cor. 5. 7, 8.

Isa. 65. 5. reprov'd by the Prophet *Isaiah*; Stand by thy self, come not near to me, for I am holier than thou: these are a smoak in my nose, a fire that burneth all the day.

4. THE Fat and the Kidneys of all Burnt-offerings were consum'd upon the Altar, to the honour of God. And this Ceremony was the direct Type of the Sacrifice in the Text, that the strength and vigour, the superiour faculties of the Soul should be sacrific'd unto God. So we are told by our *Saviour* in the Gospel, that upon this Commandment (*Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart*) hang all the Law and the Prophets.

Psal. 139. 7, 8, 9, 10. MOREOVER, when the Sacrifice was cut down, the Skin was taken off off entirely. We must offer our Sacrifices under the *New Testament*, without disguise, hypocrisie or covering: *Whether shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up unto heaven, thou art there: If I make my bed in Hell, behold thou art there: If I take the Wings of the Morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the Sea; If I say, surely the darkness shall cover me, even the night shall be light*

v. 11.

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light about me ; yea, the darkness hideth not from thee ; but the night shineth as the day ; the darkness and the light are both alike to thee. We must not think to palliate our deformities by arts and subterfuges : for all things are naked and open to his eyes. Nothing must be offered unto him, but what is pure and unmixt. Therefore the Sacrifice was carefully inspected, and narrowly examin'd. And the Pagans borrowed this Ceremony from the Patriarchs. When we appear before God, we should come with purity and simplicity of Spirit, that we may be bold to appeal to God himself in the language of the Psalmist : Search me, O God, and know my heart ; try me, and know my thoughts ; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. With what innocence and decency ought we to approach the Most High God ! The High-Priest Licinius, among the Romans, thought that the Vestal Virgin, that kept the Holy Fire carelessly, ought to be publicly scourg'd. Sulpitius was deprived of his Priesthood, because the Crest of his Mitre, through his carelessness fell to the ground in the time of sacrificing.

Corne-

Heb. 4. 12.

13.

Tesl. 2.

13. 14. 15.

Vid. Ham.

in loc.

Psal. 139.

23, 24.

Vid. Va-

ler. Ma-

xim. L. I.

De Relig.

Cornel. Cetheg. & Claud.
*Flaminio abire iussi sunt,
 propter exta parum curi-
 ose Deorum immortalium
 aris admoda.*

*Cornelius, Cethegus and Clau-
 dius* were deprived of their
 Dignity, because they
 brought the Entrails of the
 Sacrifices somewhat negli-
 gently to the *Altars*. The

Story of *Alexander's Boy*, that suffered
 his hand to be burnt, rather than di-
 sturb the Sacrifice is very well known.

*Philo de
 Animal.
 Sacrific.
 pur.*

Col. 3. 1, 2.

I MIGHT also put you in mind, that
 the Guts and the Feet were to be wash'd.
 We are certainly to be divided from
 what is more feculent, gross and putrid;
 and *Philo* finds this Myserie in it, that
 we must not converse too much with the
 Earth; nay, that in a manner we must
 be wholly above it, when we approach
 his *Altars*. And this agrees harmoni-
 moniously with the Christian Sacrifice.
*If ye are risen with Christ, seek the things
 that are above, where Christ sitteth on the
 right hand of God. Set your affection on
 things above, and not on things on the
 Earth.* This heavenly temper fortifies
 against temptations; and makes us reso-
 lute against Death; cheerful under affli-
 ctions, watchful against sin, and ready
 when our Master calleth. And since
 here

here we are but *Pilgrims and Strangers*,
*Let our conversation be in heaven, from
whence we look for the Saviour, the Lord
Jesus Christ.*

You know, that the Morning and the
Evening Sacrifices were offered in their
season, without delays or intermission.
To this Custom the *Psalmist* alludes, *My* Psal. 130.
*Soul waiteth for the Lord, more than they^d
that watch for the Morning, I say, more
than they that watch for the Morning.*
The *Priests* in the *Temple* by turns did
watch for the first appearance of the
Day, that they might offer the Morning
Sacrifice. We are to remember our *Cre-
ator in the days of our youth*, and not
delay our Repentance. Our evil habits
grow strong; our time is uncertain; the
exercise of our Reason depends upon a
thousand Contingencies; and all our
opportunities are slippery. God is pro-
voked by our delays, his Spirit is resi-
sted, and our Convictions are stifled. How
dangerous is it then, to delay the Sacri-
fice one moment longer, lest God should
judicially harden us, and confine us to
perpetual slavery? *To day then, if you
will hear his voice, harden not your
hearts;*

hearts; but speedily break off thy sins by Repentance; for the next moment may put thee under the final state of Impenitence.

BY what I have said, you may easily see that the Caution and care, that the *Jews* were tied to in their Sacrifices, did not so much concern the Levitical Oblations, as typifie the great Sacrifice of the *New Testament*. God is to be worshipped agreeably to his Nature. Our most solemn attendance on his Worship is but an abomination, if at any time it is divided from a chearful, and ingenuous surrender of our Souls to his Will. This is the Sacrifice that *S. Paul* exhorts to, with so much Rapture and Concern.

Fourthly and lastly, LET us consider the Epithets bestowed upon this Sacrifice in the Text, and these are three; 1. It must be Living. 2. Holy. 3. Acceptable.

I. I SAY, it must be a Living Sacrifice. And this in allusion to that Command under the Levitical Law, that for-
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bad any thing to be offer'd in Sacrifice, *which died of it self*; they were not so much *as to eat of it*, far less could they *sacrifice it*. Lev. 22.8. The Sacrifices of the living God, must be offered with Life; he is the original Fountain of Life, and it is Life that converses with Life. This Meditation may justly startle the inconsiderate World, who serve God with so much coldness and indifferency, as if he were not the living God. Let us prove, My Brethren, that we are living Christians, by Actions and Motions suitable to that Life, which we have from above. Giving all 2 Pet. 1.5, diligence, add to your faith virtue, and 6, 7. to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge, Temperance, and to Temperance Patience, and to Patience Godliness; and to Godliness brotherly kindness: and to brotherly kindness, Charity. We must prove, by a steady and uniform practice of Christian Virtue, that we are not the Votaries of some dead Idol, but the Disciples of the living Jesus; that as he was raised from the dead by the Glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. Rom. 6.4.

2. THE next Epithet is, the Sacrifice must be holy. I do not design to discourse here of Holiness in the general; nor of that Holiness that must run through all our Actions as we are Christians; but of that special Holiness that is related to Sacrifices. And therefore we must observe, that all Sacrifices were holy in a twofold regard. 1. They were separate from common use; And 2. They were an acknowledgment of that particular Deity, to whom they were offered.

1. I SAY, they were separate from common Use. And this is the true Notion of all Relative Holiness. It is in Allusion to this, that we are

Vid. Mr. Mede's Discourse on Hallowed be thy Name.

† 2 Cor. 6. 17. exhorted by St. Paul, † to be separate, and not to touch the unclean thing; for the Temple of God hath no agreement with Idols; Ye are the Temple of the living God, as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my People. Let us call to mind our New and heavenly Relation, by the solemnity of our Baptism,

Verse 16.

Baptism; *We are built up a spiritual House, an holy Priesthood, to offer up spiritual Sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.* Let us remember, that we are *bought with a price, we are not our own; therefore ought we to glorifie God in our bodies, and in our spirits which are Gods.* The Prophanation of things Holy and dedicated was looked upon as an extraordinary Crime. We must not take the *Vessels of the Sanctuary*, and profane Dan. 5. them to common Use. This is the Ar. 3, 4. Argument that *Sr. Paul* made use of to the *Corinthians* against Fornication; *Shall I* 1 Cor. 6. 15. *then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an Harlot.* And this Reason may be extended without any violence against all sin and impurity; we are confederate with *Jesus Christ*; we are listed under his Banners; we are separated from the World; therefore all compliance with it, as far as it is opposed to the Kingdom of Christ, is utterly unlawful: therefore *Love not the World, neither the things that are in the World; if any man love the World, the love of the Father is not in him.* 1 John 2. 15. We are sacred Persons, we are dedicated to his service in our Baptism; we

1 Pet. 2. 9. must not run into the same excess of Riot with others; *a chosen Generation, a Royal Priesthood, an holy Nation, a peculiar People; that we should shew forth the praises of him, who hath called us out of darkness into his marvellous light.*

2. SACRIFICES were not only separated from common use, but were also the badge and *Tessera* of the Votaries, and the peculiar Worship of that Deity to whom they were offered. This made it so highly criminal for the first Christians, to be present at the Sacrifices of their *Pagan Relations*; they were frequently invited to these Idolatrous Ceremonies. And though they might pretend that they came to gratifie their Friends, without any further design of Religion; yet their very presence at those Solemnities of the *Pagans*, did confute this Pretext. For the Sacrifices were the peculiarties and Bonds, that did oblige to the Worship of that Deity to whom they were offered; and both among the *Jews*, and the *Pagans*, there was some one Ceremony or other that pointed to that Deity that was worshipped, and acknowledged. The Sacrifices
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of the Jewish Religion and religious Ceremonies were (most of them) diametrically opposite to the customs of the neighbour Nations; that they might remain marks of distinction between the Idolatrous Nations and the Jews, who worshipped the Creator of Heaven and Earth. It is most certain, that the Sacrifices in all Religions have this in them, that they unite the Votary and the Deity, to whom they are offered. And therefore the Ancient Church was so severe, not only against the *Thurificati*, and such as did sacrifice in the time of Persecution; but also against such as were present at these Sacrifices. So much we gather from St. Pauls reasonings, *The Cup of Blessing which we bless, is it not the Communion of the blood of Christ?* i. e. Is it not the Characteristick of the Christian Worship? Compare this with the 20th verse following, *the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to Devils, and not to God: I would not, that ye should have fellowship with Devils. Ye cannot be partakers of the Lords Table, and of the Table of Devils; therefore you ought with all care to flee those Idolatrous meetings.*

vid. Spencer. de Legib. Hebræor.

1 Cor. 10. 14, 15, &c.

verse 21.

Now when we sacrifice our selves, with allusion to this Practice, we must remember the peculiar Laws of our Religion; the Laws that erect a Wall of Partition, between the Christians and the rest of Mankind; where then are our peculiar Obligations? We are told of them in the fifth of *St. Matth. Gospel*. Those graces of Humility, Calmness, Goodness, and Charity, that are levell'd against the prevailing Vices of Mankind. This is our Religion in its height, in its Flower, in its mark of Excellency and distinction. This is the *to words* of Christianity; by which we know our selves to be the Disciples of the *Crucified Jesus*. There was always, in all Religions, some proportion or analogy between the Sacrifice and the Deity. Let our Sacrifices therefore prove that we are the Children of the *most High God, and his Son Jesus Christ, whom to know is life eternal*. And because we have the best Religion, we must do more than others, that *they seeing our good works, may glorifie our Father which is in Heaven.*

3. THE third Epithet that St. Paul mentions, is, that the Sacrifice must be *Acceptable*. And this also in allusion to what made the Sacrifices acceptable, according to the letter of the Law : and to make it acceptable thus, it ought 1. to be offered at *Gods own Altar at Jerusalem*. The Solemnities of publick Worship were always ordered by God himself immediately ; or by them to whom he did intrust, by regular conveyance, the management of Sacred things.

LET us not then as the Author to the *Hebrews* exhorts : *forsake the assembling of our selves together, as the manner of some is ; who forsake the Communion of the Catholick Church, and erect Altar against Altar ; and to justifie their prophane Schism, must pretend the very forms of the Church, that distinguish us and our Religion from Pagans, Infidels and Hereticks. Why should I be (says the Spouse) as one that turneth aside by the Flocks of thy Companions ? Tell me where thou makest thy flocks to rest at noon ?* There is no shelter against the heat of Gods indignation to be had, but

Heb. 10.

23

Cant. 1. 7.

in the Society of the *Church*. When we are dazzled with Singularities and Novelties, and forsake the Communion of the *Church*, we venture without the Line of his Covenant and Promise, and 'tis needless to aggravate the danger of so doing.

How joyfully does the *Psalmist* tune his Harp, when they spake to him of the meetings at *Jerusalem*. *I was glad*
 Psal. 112. 1. *when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord, our feet shall stand within thy gates ! O Jerusalem. Let us say with the mournful Captives in Babylon, If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth ; if I prefer not Jerusalem to my chiefest joy.* With what impatience did the *Psalmist* sigh for the *Sanctuary* ! *As the Hart panteth after the Water-brooks, so panteth my Soul after thee, O God. My Soul thirsteth for God, for the living God, when shall I come, and appear before God ?*
 Psal. 42. 1, 2.

2. To make the Sacrifice *Acceptable*, it must needs be offered unto God without retractation, with a chearful

ful liberal Soul. And this no doubt was the Essential difference, between the Sacrifice of *Cain* and *Abel*. *Abel* gave his Sacrifice with a bountiful, benign Soul. *Cain* gave his with a penurious, unwilling Mind. And therefore the Author to the Hebrews tells us, that *Abel* offer- Heb. 11. 4.
ing unto God *πλέοντα θυσιᾶν*, a more plentiful Sacrifice; he gave it with a Soul as vast as the whole Universe; he came to the Altar with a heart fir'd with Love, to the divine Honour. But *Cain* drew a black Picture of God in his own Mind; and therefore he came with affections as dark as the Vaults of Hell, a mean and knavish Soul, who measur'd the Almighty by no other Standard, than that of his own angry and troubled Mind. God is the God of Love, *say*, *he is Love it self*. Let all our Sacrifices 1 John 4.
therefore be inflam'd with true Love; this makes the Incense burn on the Altar with a sweet smelling savour; this unites us to that blessed Company above, whose every Life is made up of chearfulness, harmony, and alacrity of Spirit.

3. If the Sacrifice be *Acceptable*, it must be offered of such things as the Law

Law allowed to be sacrific'd. Hence that known distinction of things clean, and unclean. What we sacrifice unto God under the *New Testament*, must be something within the Circle of his Commandment. It is a wild fancy and Enthusiastick madness for men to think, that for the glory of God, we may turn sanguinary Rebels, and * barbarous Murderers; as if the glory of God could be advanc'd by violating his L^{ws}.; and renversing the boundaries between Good and Evil. True Religion grows upon the Foundation of Reason, and is so congenial to our Nature, that the one cannot act regularly without the other. Do not we think that the Almighty is infinitely Wise, and powerful to act for his *Church*? Why do these unreasonable Men officiously interpose by their unhallowed Sacrifices, and strange Fire? They pretend to serve God zealously when they let loose those Passions the suppressing whereof is the most acceptable Sacrifice.

* The Murder of the Arch-Bishop of Saint Andrews.

Now I have sufficiently demonstrated what was intended by the ancient Sacrifices, and what the Christian Sacrifices

fices ought to be. And that is no other than this, which is recommended in the Text. The first Christians were derided, because of the simplicity of their Religion: and their *Apologists* unanimously declar'd, that God respected no Man for any external Excellencies, or Advantages; it was the pure and holy Soul that he delighted in. He stands not in need of Blood, Smoak, Perfumes or Incense, the best Sacrifice is, to offer up a Mind truly devoted to his fear; and this is certainly our most reasonable service. And this leads me to enquire

Clem. A.
lexandr.
Arnob.
Orig.
contr.
Cels. &
Lact. &c.

I N the third and last Place, into the Motive whereby he enforces his Exhortation, and that is, *It is your reasonable Service.* It is the Rational Worship opposite to the foolish Pageantry of the *Pagan Ceremonies*, and the cumberfom *Token* of the *Jewish Law*. It is that rational Adoration of God, that is founded upon the Eternal Rules of immutable Reason, and not on variable Constitutions. This Sacrificethen may be call'd, in the strictest sense, the *Rational Worship*.

λογική λα-
τρεία.

Gen. i.

I. BECAUSE our Reason was given us for this very end, that we might converse with God. This is the End that God had in his view, in our first Creation, *Let us make man in our Image.* There is nothing capable of conversing with God, but that which hath some resemblances of himself; Society is for Delight, and therefore we cannot converse, but with such as are like our selves. In our first Creation God made us after his own Image, that he might converse with us.

2. THIS is Reason in its highest Elevation. It cannot be rais'd higher than thus to sacrifice it self to God. For here we converse with the most perfect Object, and in the noblest manner, and with the purest Delight. True Reason is a Beam of the Divinity, a Ray of that first Light that enlivens all things, and the nearer it draws to the Center, the more it is itself. If Truth, and Light, and clear Perception be the Life of the Soul, then no doubt the nearer we draw unto the Original Truth, the more we are our selves, the more we act according to Reason, and the Primitive Excellency of our Souls.

THIS

THIS is the true Life of the Soul, the nearer approaches that it makes to matter in all its Appetites, the nearer it is to Death it self; and therefore our present state (when we wrestle with the Tentations that assault us from the lower World) is but a state of Misery; Anxiety and Darkness, if we compare it with that state of pure and unmixt Light, where our Souls are made free from these unwieldy Tabernacles. Now they are confin'd in their operations to some few and dull Senses, but when we are got above this little Globe of Earth, we may reasonably presume that our Souls will then display *new Powers and Faculties* upon new Objects, which could not be exerc'd in its state of Union to this corruptible Body, and will feel themselves more at liberty, and unconfin'd, and loos'd from that manner of Operation that their Kindred to an earthly Body did oblige them to; nay, the Philosophy of *Plato gave noble Ideas of the state of Separation, but our
Blessed

— Illic Postquam se lumine vero
 Implevit, stellasque vagas
 miratur & astra
 Fixa polus, videt quanta
 sub nocte jaceret
 Nostra dies, risitque sui
 ludibria trunci. * Luc.

Blessed Saviour alone hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel. 'Tis He that hath revealed by the Father unto us, and taught us to approach him with that rational and manly Worship that became the true Sons of God, and the Heirs of eternal Life. The more therefore that we are purified from Sensuality, and the nearer we draw to the Life of the Blessed Jesus and the accurate Rules of his Gospel, the more dispos'd, and the more ripe we are for the felicities of the World to come, and the Life of the Spirits of just men made perfect.

3. THIS Religious Reason is the Characteristick difference of our Nature : So that *Man* is better defin'd by Religion, than by Reason without Religion. The inferiour Creatures have some dark Vestiges of Reason, Sagacity and Conduct ; but no shadow of Religion : then may not we venture to say, that Reason separately considered without Religion, will not make up the Essential difference of our Nature ? The

Philo:

Philosophick Orator informs us, that *there is no Nation so savage, and unpolished, but that they had their*

*Tull. de Nat Deor. Nulla Gens tam barbara, &c.
* Cesar de Bello Gallico.*

Religious Solemnities : their Gods and their Sacrifices. And tho * *Cesar* tells us of some of the old *Germans*, that they had neither *Priests* nor *Sacrifices*, yet they worshipped the *Moon*, and the *Fire*. Thus *Religion* seems to be the hereditary Ingredient of our Nature ; we must shake off what is most intimate to our Souls, unless we employ our Reason in the Worship of God.

4. *THIS is a Reasonable Service*, because there no other Business or Employment can exhaust the strength and activity of our Spirits. The Soul ranges thorow the Creation, like the *Bee* that tastes every Flower, but quickly goes off to another. Thus our Spirits, after their most diligent enquiries into all things that the World hath, sit down meagre and discontented, they feel something within them still thirsty, and unsatisfied ; there is no fixed peace to our Spirits, until we fix the eye of our Soul upon
that

The Seventh Sermon.

that Original Beauty, and Light, *that dwells in Light inaccessible.* This is Employment proper for our Spirits, here they rest as in their true Center and Element.

To God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, be all Praise, Honour and Glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

A
S E R M O N

Preached on

Good-Friday,

O N

J O H N XVIII. V. II.

*Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up
thy Sword into the sheath, the Cup
which my Father hath given me,
shall I not drink it?*

I NEED not the help of a Preface
to reconcile this Text to *this Day*,
it being a part of that *Gospel*, which
the *Church* appoints to be read on
this Solemn Fast; when the *Universal
Church* puts on Mourning, and beholds
her *Redeemer*, dying in the Arms of
Love.

T

T H E

The Eighth Sermon.

THE *Verse* that I have now read, contains our *Saviour's* fixt resolution to act the last part himself with true Magnanimity; so he stood like an impregnable Rock, not only against the treachery, tumult and rage of his Enemies; but also, the timorous and faint Counsels, and insinuations of his dearest Companions. I suppose the *Church* appointed the *Gospel* for this day to be taken out of St. *John*, because he was an Eyewitness of the whole Tragedy, from first to last.

THE beginning of this *Verse* is a Command to St. *Peter*, to forbear these Methods and Weapons of humane Violence, that his, ill-plac'd, (but well meant zeal) did suggest unto him. The Kingdom, Scepter and Laws of the *Messias*, needed not those Weapons of Iron and Steel, but they were to be advanc'd to their height, by Patience, by Humility, by Sufferings, and by the Cross. And this *Philosophy* the *Sophies* of the World did despise.

THE latter part of the *Verse* (to which I invite your Meditation more closely)

closely) is our *Saviour's* resolution to go through his most formidable sufferings, with a chearful and undaunted Spirit; inflam'd with Love, Fortitude, and invincible Zeal. Here we have not his sufferings divided in several parcels, but a full view of them in gross, and in their solemn Circumstances; and all of them made bitter, and terrible by the most exquisite aggravations.

THUS the Captain of our Salvation considered his Enemies, drawn up against him in battel array. He saw all the Powers of Hell combin'd, and all their Malice skrew'd up to the highest Pin; and this Malice vented against himself, with all the marks of affront and indignity. All the suffering Capacities of his *human Nature* were at once assaulted, and the terrour of the *Roman Power*, the sullen hypocrisie of the *Pharisees*, and the Clamours of the Rabble, were all in their united force muster'd against him. Yet he stood like a Rock of Brass to receive their blows, and he tells *S. Peter* (with design to cool his fervour) *That the Son of God must suffer.*

T 2

THE

Vid. Grot.
ad Matth.
c. 20. v. 22.

THE *Cup* which my Father giveth me, &c. It was usual amongst the Jews, to express the happy or adverse Lot of a Mans Condition, under the notion and phrase of a *Cup*. Psalm 11. v. 6. *Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest, this shall be the portion of their Cup.* Psalm 16. v. 5. *The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance, and of my Cup, thou maintainest my lot.* The meaning then is this, That *Cup* which is mixt by human Malice, and filled with Gall and Vinegar, is nevertheless ordered by my Father. He superintends all things, and not a hair of our head falls to the ground, without his watchful providence. This is a *Cup* indeed, that hath in it all degrees of terror and poison, and such as may fright and daunt the courage of the whole Creation, *Yet I will drink it to the bottom*; for it is prepared by my Father, nay, *I will drink it chearfully*, even when my flesh shrinks at it, and by its innocent reluctances, testifies its fear.

THUS we see what is folded up in those words: but because our Eyes are not strong enough to view them all at once,

once, let us fix our attention on them in this Method. 1. His bloody sufferings, and more particularly the last Scene of them. 2. Let us consider by whom this *Cup* was ordered and prepared, *It was the Cup that his Father gave him.* 3. *With what courage and resolution he drank it.*

1. WE have his sufferings under the notion of a *Cup*, especially the last and most Tragical Scene of them, by the nature of his glorious Office, and the determinate Counsel of God, * *He was a* * *Man of sorrow, and acquainted with grief.* † *He endured the contradiction of sinners.* † *and the Cross was the very Character of his Kingdom.* Let us but view the preparations to this Tagedy, and secondly, the last act of it.

First, I SAY, the preparations towards it. And here we may stop, and go no further, for we are not able to fathom the very beginnings of his sorrow; they are too deep at the entry; *Behold and see if there be any sorrow* Lam. 1. *like unto his sorrow, He was plowed up* v. 12. *on, and they made long furrows upon* Psal. 129. *his* v. 3.

Matth. 26.
39.

his back. Take but a view of him in his *Agony* in *Gethsemany*, when the arrows of God stuck fast in his Soul; when the warm and celestial influences of Heaven seem'd to be suspended: when he was left alone to contend with the malice of Earth, and the fury of Hell. Who can conceive the weight of this pressure? How astonishing is it in the very beginning of those Agonies, to consider the very outward posture of his Body! *He went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, If it be possible, let this Cup pass from me; nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.*

AND must *his face* kiss the ground, who supports the whole Creation? Are *his arms* become feeble, that is the strength of Men and Angels? Shall fear and darkness take hold of *Him* that is *the Light of the World*? Shall the *Sun of Righteousness* be thus eclips'd, and the Fountain of Innocence and Purity thus grapple with misery and disaster? What Consternation is this? What Complication of Mysteries? Yet we see but little, when we view no more than the outward

outward posture of *his* Body. Dare we enter at a distance into his Soul? Is that undefil'd Temple of the Divinity become the habitation of grief and fear? Is Light it self become Darknes? And are the original Notions of Things confounded? Is the Wisdom of the Father put to this? What shall I say? Are all the Laws of the Creation broken at once, and innocence it self made the only Theatre of Calamity?

WE are not able to conceive the height of his sorrow, if we call to mind the Phrases that the Evangelists make use of, to signify his Agony. *He began to be sorrowful.* *He began to be sore amazed,* saith S. Mark, *and to be very heavy,* say both of them. And S. Matthew's Phrase is very significant, a little after *ἡ ψυχὴ αὐτοῦ ὡς νῆα περιβεβλημένη ὕδατι.* *My Soul is encompass'd with grief, as an Island is with Water in the midst of the Ocean; I am surrounded with fears and clouds on all hands; I see such plentiful showers of indignation and violence, ready to discharge themselves against me, that I am reduc'd to the last extremities.* The complaints of

Matth. 26.
37.

Ἀντιθέτου,
ἐκ δὲ μὲν
αὐτοῦ, ἀδὴ
μὲν.

Job 16. 13. Job are most applicable to me, for his Archers compass me round about, he cleaveth my reins asunder, and doth not spare; he poureth out my gall upon the ground. He breaketh me with breach upon breach; he runneth upon me like a Giant. I have sewed sackcloth upon my skin, and defiled my horn in the dust. My face is foul with weeping, and on my eye lids is the shadow of death; not for any injustice in mine hands; also my prayer is pure.

v. 16.

Psal. 22.

AND this sorrow was not only express'd by his Lips, his Eyes, his Prayers and strong Cries to the Father; but every Pore in his Body spoke it out in great drops of blood; as the Psalmist prophesied of him, *I am poured out like Water, all my bones are out of joint: My heart is like wax melted in the midst of my bowels.* And if the Prologue to his Sufferings hath all this in it, our apprehensions of them must fall short of their extent and latitude; especially that part of them, that were transacted in the inward Regions of the Mind; when he offer'd himself a Victim for the Sins of the World; when he was made a curse for us, who

who knew no sin ; when he stood in our room , and sustain'd the weight of our sins , as our High-Priest.

OH ! how terrible was this *Cup*, that made the *Prince* of Courage and Resolution, the original Spring of Strength and Constancy , all shiver and tremble into Tears, Cries and Prayers ! *He* betook him to his strong hold, his *Father*, whom he never had offended ; and he prayed in the strength of the most powerful Arguments, that bind up the hands of the Divine Justice , from inflicting punishments on lesser persons , I mean, those Arguments from Love, Compassion and the Relation of a *Father* : *O Father, let this Cup pass from me.*

BUT as if the Eternal Fountain of Pity had been dryed up ; as if boundless Mercy and Compassion had forgot their Nature and necessary Emanations ; *he* is suffered to contend with all those terrors alone. The Hosts of Heaven seem to joyn with him in this prayer, having their Wings ready trimm'd to fly down to the Earth for his rescue ; yet they are commanded to stand aloof, and behold this

this combat, without interposing in their Masters quarrel; and that one of their number that was sent to comfort him, was allowed to do no more, than to afford him strength enough to drink that *Cup* to the bottom.

Seneca.

THE Philosophers do tell us, That a virtuous Man fighting with difficulties and disasters, and by his conduct keeping his mind free from vice, is most beloved of God. But how soon would all the Heroes of Philosophy be confounded with the least share of these dismal sufferings? The Seraphims of Glory stand amazed to see the Humane Nature in the midst of all sinless infirmities, give such proofs of valour and magnanimity. And the Father took pleasure to baffle the Devil (*i. e.* the pride and arrogance of the World) by the patience and resignation of his only begotten Son; and he design'd to teach Mankind by his submission, that patience and suffering is the way to the highest glory. And though this truth be despis'd by the carnal World, yet the Morals of the Gospel are built upon it. We must cut off our right hands,

and pull out our right eyes, if we enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.

IF we consider more particularly his behaviour under these first Skirmishes in the Garden, we may observe, 1. His Reluctancies, *Let this Cup pass from me;* But was not *his Cross* and Sufferings the constant Theme of *his Sermons*? Did not all the Sacrifices of the Law of *Moses* represent *his Passion* at a distance? And the Prophecies of former Ages, prepare all men to receive this great Truth, that *the just was to dye for the unjust*? And did not *Moses* and *Elias* treat of his Sufferings on the Mount of Transfiguration? Whence then is this trouble of mind, this extraordinary Agony? Whence all those appearances of fear and surprize?

All is true; yet the sinless Humane Nature meeting at once with every thing that is odious, terrible and disgraceful, shrinks and recoils. And herein is *his Victory*, that he so perfectly resign'd himself to the *Will of his Father*, that he rejoices in the midst of *his sorrows*, to sacrifice his feelings and infirmities to the

the Conduct and Wisdom of God. *O Miracle of Patience! O invincible Resolution, folded up in that one word, Not my Will, but thy Will be done!* Thus verifying himself to be the *Messias*, prophesied of by the *Psalmist*, *Then said, I, Lo, I come, in the volume of thy Book it is written of me, I delight to do thy Will,*
 Psal. 40. 7. *O my God, yea, thy Law is within my heart.* It was his *Meat and his Drink to do the Will of his Father*, through the whole tract of his Life in lesser instances; but now, when the last period of it drew nigh, when the Sacrifice was ready to be laid upon the Altar, then it was all burnt and consum'd with Love. It mounted the Heavens in a Fiery Chariot of pure and unmixt Zeal; and by one perfect act of Oblation, sacrific'd his Will to the Will of his Father, without reserve or limitation.

WE shall best discover how comprehensive this surrender was, when we read the History of the Gospel, and see with what triumph and insolence, his enemies insulted over him: Even in *Jerusalem*, where his Miracles made him famous, there they prepared their Whips and

and their Scourges; their Buffets and their Thorns to *afflict him*; and a Mock Purple to make *him ridiculous*. And thus arrayed, *he* is brought forth to divert the great crouds of People that flocked to *Jerusalem* about this time: and they were to tell the shameful story of his Sufferings over the habitable World; yet there was no shaking of his Courage and Resignation.

AND to let the World see, that *his* Love to Mankind was more than heroick, and beyond the Fictions of *Poets*, and truly becoming the Son of God, and the designs of our *Redemption*: when the Paroxisms of *his Agony* gave him the least respite, *he* returns to his Disciples. When Heaven and Earth seem'd to be made up of anger and indignation against *him*, yet does *he* not forget them; and though they became stupid and unsollicitous for *him*, their Supreme Lord and Benefactor, *he* does not chide them with any bitterness and reproach, but only expostulates with *S. Peter*, *Couldst not thou watch with me one hour?* Here are words strong enough to break the hardest heart, able to melt the most obstinate

stinate, the most inflexible disposition : Words so sweet, and so full of tenderness, and yet so keen and piercing, that they may awaken the most stupid and inconsiderate.

AND now we may follow *him* from the Garden to *Mount Calvary*, and behold *his* behaviour there ; and because we are not able to speak of *his* sufferings, but very faintly, and far below their astonishing Nature, we may in the History of the Passion fix our attention on some Particulars that are most conspicuous. And Divines generally take notice of these three :

1. THE Shame of it.
2. THE Pain of it.
3. THE Curse of it.

I. I SAY, the Shame of it. God hath, for wise and great ends, planted in our Nature a deep sense of honour * ; there is nothing that we feel more tenderly, than the wounds that are made in our esteem. All generous

* Cic. de offic. Nam negligere quid de se quisque sentiat, non solum arrogantis est, sed omnino dissoluti.

generous Souls expose every thing to hazard, rather than make shipwrack of their reputation. It could not then but be very bitter and uneasy to the innocent Soul of our blessed Saviour, to be carried in triumph by *his* enemies; to be expos'd to the affronts and indignities of the rude and tumultuous Rabble; to be flouted and abus'd by a prophane and inconsiderate multitude; to be sent from one Hall to another; and hear the blasphemies and scoffs of a sacrilegious heady Crew. He was treated with all the indignities that were due to the vilest Malefactors; and at last (that he might make good in himself the Type of the *Brazen Serpent*) he was lifted upon the *Cross*. A punishment so odious to mankind, that when the *Roman Orator* accus'd *Varres* for having crucified a Citizen, he said, *it was a nameless wickedness, a crime of so high a nature, that it could not be express'd by words.* This shameful punishment, this *Servile supplicium*, was the punishment our Saviour chose to expiate our sins by: So that the Prophecy of

Facinus est vincere civem Romanum, scelus est verberare, prope parricidium necare: quid dicam in crucem tollere? Verbo quidem satis digno tam nefaria res appellari nullo modo potest.

Pfal. 22.
6, 7, 8.

of the *Psalmist* was truly verified in him; *I am a Worm and no Man, a reproach of Men, and despised of the People: All they that see me, laugh me to scorn; they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, he trusted in the Lord, let him deliver, seeing he delighted in him.*

Pfal. 22.
27.

Chap. 23.

They look upon me, and stare upon me. And so we find the event accomplish'd in *S. Luke's Gospel*; *And the people stood, and gazed on him.*

How vain and empty are the transient *Hosanna's* of the multitude? The *plaudites* of the *Croud* are much more uncertain than the *Weather*. For this is govern'd by *Natural Causes*, that are steady in their operations; but the same *Causes* produce contrary *Effects*, frequently amongst the people. There is

is no true honour, but in doing that which is just, generous and equal; though by doing so, we should pull down upon our selves the Pillars upon which Heaven and Earth do stand. There is so much of God in a resolute mind, that it stands proof against the shakings and commotions of all foreign violence: *for he that is in us is stronger than he that is in the World.*

CAN we view our *Saviour* thus run down with cruelty and rudeness, and not trample upon the fantastick shadows of honour, that mankind so much admire? *He* was thus expos'd to the abuses and mockings of the multitude, that *he* might suffer in those capacities that are most tender and delicate. *He* suffer'd these wounds, that enter the fancy, and pierce to the bottom of the Soul; that which all men feel most afflictive and grievous. *He* endur'd the contradiction of sinners against himself. *He* endured the Cross, and despised the shame; not through a *Stoical* apathy, or a stupid carelessness, but the highest magnanimity. For *he* had in his view the glory that was set before him, the honour of God,

U the

Heb. 12. 4.

Phil. 2. 6, 7, 8. the Conquest of the Devil, and the purchase of Souls. *He despised all vain applause, and being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto Death, even the death of the Cross.*

T H U S, to be treated in this Theatrical manner, when his sufferings were heightened by all the Solemnities of Disgrace, could not but be very afflictive to the blessed Soul of our Lord Jesus. *He* was endued with that natural Passion, (our abhorrence of Disgrace) and *he* felt the smart of this shameful usage, yet *he* despised it and all its consequences, in view of the accomplishment of our Redemption. What is it then that we see in Human glory, when *He* chose to be thus *despis'd by Men*? What do we take our selves to be, when our hearts recoil with so much impatience, and bitterness against the least surmise of Contempt? How come we to be so delicate, when our Lord and Master was

was so roughly handled? But it was not only the *shame*.

But *secondly*, **THE** *pain* that we are to take notice of in this Punishment. *His* pure and Virginal Constitution heightened *his* Pain; the Nails were fastened in those parts that are most feeling, *his hands, and his feet*.

How terrible is this truth to all the Sons of softness, idleness and luxury; who swim in Pleasures as the Leviathan doth in the Ocean. When we consider our *Saviours* pains how may we be astonish'd, that we should with so much care and anxiety look after these bodies of ours; these receptacles of Impurities, these sinks of Uncleanneſs! When we remember that our *Saviour* spent whole Nights in Prayer, and sometimes sat wearied by the *Well of Samaria*, and asked a poor Woman a little Water, and upon the day of his greatest Triumph, when he came into *Jerusalem*, he rode upon an *Aſs*, and that *Aſs* was not his own; why should we caress, with so much fondness, those heaps of Dust and Ashes that shall shortly crumble into rot-

renness and dishonour, whether we will or not? Did *He* with so much resolution and courage suffer the whole Combination of disasters, in his Mind, in his Reputation, and in his Body? And do we think to dwell for ever with that *King of Sufferings*, and yet suffer no degrees of *Martyrdom*, never undergo any part of the *Cross*?

Thirdly, NEXT to the *Shame*, and *Pain*; let us consider the *Curse* belonging to it. St. *Paul* tells us, *That he was made a Curse for us*, i. e. He was devoted to publick Infamy and Malediction, and seemed to be deserted of God himself. *We esteemed him smitten of God* (saith *Isaiah*.) In all publick Sacrifices there was some Ceremony, to signify the translation of the punishment, from the People to the Sacrifice. Thus the Person among the Heathens, that was appointed for a publick Sacrifice, had all the Imprecations of the People heaped upon him as he went along the streets. But our *Saviour* did not only expiate the sins of one City, Kingdom, or Family, but the sins of the whole World, past, present, and to come, in
their

their most heinous Nature, and numberless Aggravations. He made Atonement for them all by that one peculiar Sacrifice, which needs not again be repeated, because it had no imperfection. * *He himself alone bore our sins in his own body on the Tree, that we being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness.* And our sins are thus for ever buried, if we do not rekindle the Wrath of God by our impenitence. Now when we remember the Love of Jesus in dying for us, and all the circumstances of his Disgrace; and the variety of these peculiar Vertues that appeared in him, under his saddest Torture, may not we pray in the words of the * Greek Church? By thy unknown sufferings, Lord have mercy upon us.

Heb. 9. 25;
26, 28.
* 1 Pet. 2.
24.

* Liturg.
Græc. διὰ
τῶν παθόντων
ὑμῶν
ἀγνοῶντων.

Now I go forward to the second Particular that I propos'd to speak to, and that is, by whom this Cup was ordered and prepared. And our Saviour tells S. Peter, that it was the Cup his Father gave him to drink. The sufferings of our Saviour were not casual and fortuitous, but duly weigh'd by infinite Wisdom. So much the Apostles St. Peter, and St. John, in

ACT. 4. 27.

their Seraphick Prayer acknowledge, *Of a truth against thy Holy Child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together for to do what-soever thy hand, and thy Counsel determined before to be done.* I might illustrate this Truth, 1. From the signification of Ceremonies under the Law, particularly that of the *Scape-Goat*, and the *Red Heifer*. 2. From the Prediction of Prophets, especially the Prophecies of *Isaiah* and *Daniel*. 3. From the nature of his Undertaking; whether 1. the Sacrifice that he offer'd; or 2. the Religion that he planted. I say from all those Heads, I might demonstrate his great Truth, *viz.* that the sufferings of our *Saviour* were weighed and ordered in the Divine Counsel. But I must leave this, and the third Particular also, which was the alacrity and readiness of his Soul, to drink this *Cup*, insinuated in the Question propos'd to St. Peter, *Shall I not drink the Cup that my Father giveth me?* And those things I leave at present, that I may make some Application of what I have already insisted on. And

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I. CAN we read the History of *his Passion* without any Concern? Are we made of Flint, Marble, or Adamant? O stupid, and inconsiderate Sinner! Wilt thou look upon *him* whom thou hast pierced by thy sins? We find that when this Tragedy was acted, universal Nature seem'd to groan. The Sun did hide his head, the Earth blush'd to be the Theatre of so much Villany, and have we no sense at all? When we remember that we were principally accessory to his grievous Torments, *He was bruise'd for our iniquities, he was wounded for our transgressions, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and by his stripes are we healed.* Shall we again crucifie *him afresh* by our treacherous and perfidious impenitence? This is a higher outrage, than that other committed by the Jews. As for *his* Crucifiers, many of them were converted, but this obstinate contempt of his Love sets us without the bounds of Mercy, tho *his mercy be above the heavens, and over all his works.*

To provoke *him* again by our sins, is a downright affront to his Love ; but after such undeniable proofs of *his* kindness to disbelieve the Gospel is utterly inexcusable. Infidelity makes the nearest approaches to the sin against the *holy Ghost* ; which I take to be, the malicious opposition of that Light, and Evidence which God offers for our Conviction. When the *Messias* came *he* proved *his* Mission and Authority by the most convincing Miracles, and Signs more glorious than ever *Moses* wrought, nor was it reasonable to expect that *he* should bring with him, fairer Credentials to recommend himself and his Doctrine than those *he* displayed before *his* Countrymen. But *his* Countrymen shut their Eyes against the Light, *He came unto his own, and his own received him not.* And we are guilty of the very same sin, if we trample upon the Gospel, which *at first* began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed by them that heard him. *He* seal'd the Truth by *his* Death, confirm'd it by *his* Resurrection, and by the various Gifts of the *holy Ghost* proves beyond

John 1.

beyond all contradiction, that *He is at the right hand of God the Father.*

Secondly, DID our Saviour thus die for us? Then, we ought to treat our selves with greater regard, than to be enslav'd to our former sin. Did he hide the glory of his Divinity, that he might redeem us from misery and despair by his own Blood! Was it for this that he took flesh of our Flesh, that we might be made partakers of the divine Nature? Why do we live, like so many mean, fordid, abject Creatures, as if we were confin'd by the frame of our Nature, to the Earth only? As if we could look no higher, than the trifling interests of this World. So sadly have we forgot our selves, and though very frequently our Pride makes us hateful to God, and odious to one another, yet do we truckle under the meanest Vices. We were not redeem'd with corruptible things, such as silver, and gold, but with the precious blood of the Son of God. This is the Argument that St. Paul makes use of, to heighten our esteem of our Brethren. Wilt thou make thy Brother perish, for whom

whom Christ died? And the Argument of St. Peter, to aggravate the folly and wickedness of the Hereticks, *that they deny'd the Lord that bought them. To be bought by the blood of the Son of God*, is the powerful Argument of the Gospel against Sin; and if we resist *this*, we may justly fear to be delivered up to a *Reprobate Sense*. Our sins set us at the greatest distance from God; he is Light, Beauty, Strength and Perfection; and Sin is folly, weakness, error and deformity. Let us therefore fly from it, because so horrid in its Nature, so dismal in its consequences, that nothing could atone it, but *the Blood of the Son of God*.

Thirdly, HERE is the true remedy against despair. So reasons S. Paul, *He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?* And a little after, *Who is he that condemneth? it is Christ that died?* This is the powerful Oratory that prevails before the Throne of God; nay, it is irresistible in the mouth of a penitent sinner. *Come now, and*

Rom. 8.

32.33.34

and let us reason together saith the Lord, *Ila. i. 18.*
 though your sins be as scarlet, they shall
 be as white as snow; though they be red
 like crimson, they shall be as wooll. 'Tis
 in the vertue of *this blood*, that we ap-
 proach the Throne without fear and dis-
 fidence; the God of Pity and Compassion
 cannot shut his ears against those
 prayers that are made *under the media-*
tion of Jesus Christ; the hands of Justice
 are bound up, when his bloody Sweat and
 Agony, his Passion, Death and Burial are
 commemorated. How fixt and immo-
 veable is this foundation of our Faith?
 that we have such an *High Priest at the*
right hand of the Father, who by one Ob-
lation of himself through the Eternal Spi-
rit, sat down victorious on his Throne,
Powers, Dominions and Principalities be- Heb.
ing put under him. Though the Doctrine
 of the Cross be the Scorn of Jews and
 Gentiles; yet let us say with *S. Paul*, God
 forbid that I should glory, *save in the*
Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. And this
 is still so much the surer, when we con-
 sider the Nature of that Attonement that
 our Saviour made. This Sacrifice was
 propitiatory and piacular; for he suffe-
 red

red not only for our good, but in our room; and they who would make *him* to act no more in all this, than the part of a resolute Martyr, destroy one of the prime foundations of our Religion, and of our hope, in the hour of death, and at the day of Judgment.

Fourthly, WHEN we fix our thoughts on the death of Jesus, we ought to practise those Graces that then appear'd most eminently in him; his Contempt of the World, his Love to his Enemies, his Patience and Resignation. Can we dwell on the thoughts of his love towards Mankind, and not be inflam'd with the highest Zeal to serve him? How can we forget the glorious adventures of his Love, who dyed for us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us Kings and Priests unto God. Who shall separate us from the Love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? V. 38. For I am perswaded, that neither death, nor life, nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor Powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth,

Revel.

Rom. 8.

35.—38.

The Eighth Sermon.

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*depth, nor any other creature, shall be able v. 39.
to separate us from the Love of God, which
is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

*To God the Father, Son, and
Holy Ghost, be all Power,
Praise and Dominion,
World without end.
Amen.*

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S E R M O N
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I. CO R. ii. V. 3, 4, 5.

*And I was with you in weakness, and
in fear, and in much trembling.*

*And my speech, and my preaching was
not with enticing words of mans
wisdom, but in demonstration of the
Spirit, and of power.*

*That your faith should not stand in the
wisdom of men, but in the power of
God.*

IN the First Chapter, S. Paul had
in his view the allaying the dif-
ferences that had arisen amongst
the *Corinthians*, concerning their
Teachers, whom they should follow.
He

He puts them in mind how he had preached the Gospel amongst them, and by what Arguments they had been perswaded to embrace it, *i. e. not with the wisdom of words.* And again, *not with enticing words of mans wisdom.*

HE thought it not proper to advance his doctrine and design amongst them, by the accurate and artificial reasonings of the wise men of the *Gentiles*, but, *in the demonstration of the Spirit, and of power.*

THE elegant Orations, and Philosophical Discourses of the *Learned Gentiles*, by which they were wont to put off their opinions to the people withal, he did not judge proofs proper for, and suitable to, the nature of his Doctrine. It being wholly Divine, it required divine demonstration, something above the reach of human speculation, something yet untraced by their most accurate Disquisitions. So the supernatural gifts bestowed on the followers of *Christ*, by which they were made to interpret the sacred Oracles, and ancient Prophecies, concerning the *Messias*; and

accommodate those Prophecies, to the most particular circumstances of his Kingdom. By which they were enabled to discern Spirits, and dispossess Devils; such, and such miraculous appearances, together with the Miracles of *Christ*, and his *Apostles*, both upon the dead, and the living, were proofs of divinity in their own Nature; far beyond the subtile reasonings, of Orators, and Philosophers; more suitable to the design in hand, more undeniable, and authentick; and therefore a proof much more solid, and clear, than if they had recommended the Doctrine of Christianity, with all the eloquence, and ostentation of words.

THIS method propos'd in the first Chapter, He owns, and vindicates in this, from all the objections, and carnal imputations, that the admirers of Philosophy on the one hand, and heretical Seducers on the other, might lay to his charge. He did not declare unto them the Testimony of God, with the excellency of speech, or wisdom. It was not his design to read unto them *Lectures of Plato's Philosophy*; but to recom-

mend *Christ, and him Crucified*; to preach the humble doctrine of the *Cross*; the plain and necessary Articles of Christianity; the very first, and indispensable principles of our Faith; not the more abstruse mysteries, (of which as yet possibly they were not capable) but those early lessons that we must know, as soon as we become Disciples of that Heavenly Institution.

THIS Doctrine recommended at such a time, and by such men, so far above the genius of all the prevailing sects of *Philosophers*, and appearing with so much modesty, and humility, had certainly been run down in triumph by the *Patrons of Paganism, and Infidelity*; if it had not been supported by another kind of proof, and demonstration, than that which was taught in the *Athenian Schools*, Therefore the *Corinthians* ought not to be much stumbled at the petulance, and ignorance of false teachers, who despis'd what they did not understand, and measur'd wisdom, by a standard of their own. The Gospel was recommended amongst them by such proofs, as were agreeable to its Nature; that

that their belief might not depend upon any thing, that was human and artificial; but on the most solid and immovable foundations, the Wisdom and Power of God clearly display'd in vindication of the Gospel. This is shortly the scope of the words that I have read: The success and efficacy of what he preach'd did not at all depend on the order and composure of his periods; tho one might observe Eloquence, and Majesty in his Expressions, if they were not too much addicted to what they valued amongst the *Grecian Orators*; yet did he not at all affect that which the *wise men of Greece* most gloried in; he design'd that it might be very clear: That the success of his Doctrine should depend on supernatural proofs, or the light, and majesty, and conviction, that attends the power of miracles.

LET us view those words more closely, and examine their phrase, and dependance, and see how clear a proof they contain of the excellency of Christian Religion: And in them we have three particulars.

1. HIS uneasie circumstances, and weaknesses, that made his work more difficult.

2. THE manner of his address, *not with the enticing words of mans wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit, and in power.*

3. THE true reason of this whole Oeconomy, that *their faith might stand in the power of God.* And,

2. ad-
vina.

1. WE have here his uneasie circumstances, and weaknesses, that made his work more difficult. *I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling.* The weaknesses wherewith the Apostle was encompassed in preaching of the Gospel, were partly his own bodily frailties, partly the infirmities that did arise from the many persecutions of his implacable enemies, *for the Gospels sake.* The Jews, and the Gentiles did daily thirst for his blood, and from place to place, he was hunted *like a Partridge upon the mountains.* Those frailties, whether incident to the peculiar

cular structure of his body, or whether left by the stripes and violences frequently offered unto him, made his person appear despicable to them, that only considered the outward appearance; That mighty Soul that had nothing less in his view, than the total overthrow of the Devils universal Monarchy; this Soul I lay, dwelt in a ruinous tabernacle. This he himself often acknowledged, 2. Cor. 10. v. 1. *I beseech you by the meekness, and gentleness of Christ; who in presence am base among you.* And again, v. 7. *Do you look on things after the outward appearance.* Consider also the 2. Cor. 4. 7. *We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.* v. 8. *We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed, we are perplex'd, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed.* And again, Chap. 6. v. 4. *In all things approving our selves as the Ministers of God in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in watchings, in fastings.* Consider also 2. Cor. 7. 5, 6. *For when we were come*

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into Macedonia, our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side; without were fightings, within were fears; and it may be the messenger of Satan mentioned 2. Cor. 12. 7. was some bodily infirmity.

Now considering the natural temper of his body, the extraordinary troubles, watchings, and labours that he endured, and the voluntary restraints, and chastisements he had used towards himself; we may easily understand, what a complication, and series of difficulties, he had to wrestle with. Sometimes hardly escaping with his very life, *Let down in a basket by the wall, and to put this account beyond all debate, read 2. Cor. 11. 23. forward: Are they ministers of Christ, I speak as a fool, I am more in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. v. 24. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes, save one. v. 25. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I ston'd, thrice I suffer'd shipwrack, night and day I have been in the deep. v. 26. In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, —*

In

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*In weariness, and painfulness, in watchings
often, in hunger and thirst, in fasting
often, in cold and nakedness.*

NOW the natural result of this heap of Sufferings, and Calamities, so thick crowded together, were fear, and trembling. Partly his innocent fear of dangers, and persecutions; partly his holy care, and solicitude, for the success and propagation of the Gospel; though the false teachers vilified the *blessed Apostle*, because of his Infirmities, yet considering the nature of his Office, and the design of his Ministry, they were an undeniable proof of his authority, and mission; and consequently of the verity, and divinity of Christian Religion.

FOR allow but the Apostles to be men of common sense, and desirous to preserve themselves; if they were not sure of the truth of what they delivered; how unaccountable were their sufferings? and therefore their calamities so much mistaken by others, had in them the strongest proof of their sincerity, since they were ready to sacrifice all

that was dear to human Nature, in defence of the Gospel. How came they so readily, and unanimously to part with all their justest Interests, if they had not the highest assurances of their Commission and Authority, and of a life after this, more pure, solid, and immoveable, than what we here enjoy? How came they to be so ready upon all occasions, to undergoe all that was most bitter, and painful, most disgraceful, and ignominious, and this for no other design, than to advance a fable amongst mankind; and for no other reward either here, or hereafter, than stripes, tumults, persecutions, and martyrdoms? He that supposes the Apostles to have been endowed with ordinary reason and judgment, and yet will believe that *they followed cunningly devised fables*, for no other design than to make themselves miserable, to all intents, and purposes; will yield his assent to something more incredible, more monstrously fictitious than the most Romantick Follies of imagination.

AND if we yet suppose, that the Apostles were destitute of the use of their
their

their reason, and still be able, to the wonder and admiration of mankind, to contrive the story of the Gospel, so orderly, and coherent, and adapt the most antient Prophecies to its proof and illustration, and that to the conviction, and astonishment of the learnedest of their opposers. He, I say, that believes all this (which *Atbeists* and *Anti-scripturists* are obliged to do) believes something more fabulous, more inconsistent, than all the *Legends of Poets*, and all the adventures of *Knight-errantry*. The Apostle then is so far from denying his Infirmities, that he glories in them as one special proof of his mission, and authority; highly agreeable to the Christian Religion, and the tendency of that Doctrine, that recommended *Christ Crucified to the world*. In another manner, and by other demonstrations, than those demonstrations that the *Schools of Philosophy* did furnish, I have chosen to discourse of the Sufferings, and Infirmities of the Apostle, under this aspect, as they yield a clear proof of Christianity, rather than to run out in the commendations of the courage, and patience of Primitive Christians,

ans, and it will appear in its greater lustre, if we consider.

2. **THE** manner of his address; not in the eloquent and harmonious periods of Rhetorical Discourses, but by a more heavenly and victorious demonstration, more certain, and undeniable, than the surest Principles of the *Grecian Philosophy*, *not in the enticing words of mans wisdom, but in the demonstration of the Spirit, and of Power.* There are, who understand by these words the inward and powerful illuminations and presence of the Divine Spirit upon a mans heart, in order to his Sanctification. I am very far from denying that Illumination to be necessary, but that is not meant in this place, nor by this phrase. For the proof that the Apostle brings here, is External, and consequently must be referred to that demonstration of the Divine Power, that waits upon the Apostles, in preaching and asserting the Gospel, I mean the *power of Miracles.*

IF it were needful to cite Authors for this, I might name many, I take it for

for granted, that here the Apostle is to prove the vanity of them, that oppos'd his Doctrine, and slighted his Methods for want of human eloquence, he states the opposition between their way, and his.

THEY set off their *Dogmata* with all the dress and *parade* of Rhetorical Amplifications, their Proofs and Topicks mustered up in all the braveries of Art, and Logick. He spoke and asserted the mysteries of the Gospel with greater simplicity; but greater Majesty; less Ostentation in his utterance, but much more Power and Efficacy. We need not think by this, that the Apostle was not eloquent; but that he did not intend, nor design to lay the stress of his Sermons on his eloquence. He derived their success and victory from a higher spring. Those who boasted themselves most in their philosophical composures might be overcome by such as were more eminent in that kind of Learning. But the proofs of our Apostle were wholly out of that road, and beyond the reach and skill of the profoundest Sophies; even a demonstration that all
his

his Enemies were forc'd to acknowledge, *it was the finger of God.* And because this is so material to the Apostles design, and contains in it, a very solid proof for our Religion; I will endeavour to open the nature of it more fully.

1. **LET** us consider the force and rational evidence that Miracles give to the Testimony of him, that works them.

2. **THE** special force they had to prove the Verity and Authority of Christian Religion. And,

1. **WE** must acknowledge the possibility of Miracles, since we acknowledge a Deity, and a Providence. For he that hath established the Laws of Nature, and directed the motions of all its wheels, may for special ends of his Providence interrupt that order and method, and let us understand that he is above Nature. And it is very reasonable, and just for mankind, upon such solemn occasions, to look for extraordinary Appearances of the Divine Power, both to confirm their Faith, and provoke

voke their Gratitude. when God establishes new Laws, or repeals old ones, 'tis highly necessary, that his Message and Testimony be seal'd with some such undeniable Evidence, as cannot rationally be resisted. The multitude of juggling tricks, and impostures in the world, is so far from lessening this Argument, that they rather strengthen it: Because if Miracles were not acknowledged to be a sufficient evidence of a Divine Testimony, they had never been counterfeited. And it is certain that our reason, closely and duly applyed to all circumstances, is able to distinguish between a true Miracle, and a counterfeit. So we may take it for granted that the Miracles wrought by *Christ*, and his *Apostles* were a sufficient undeniable Evidence, that their Testimony was from God, *i. e. that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messias; and that they were his Followers, and Disciples*, and truly and sufficiently acquainted with his Discipline and Doctrine.

2. THIS will appear, if we consider the special necessity there was, that such Miracles should be wrought in
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confirmation of Christian Religion, either to point out. 1. The Person of the *Messias*. Or, 2. To dispossess the Devil out of his strong holds. Or, 3. To satisfy the expectations of all men both *Jews*, and *Gentiles*.

1. THIS Proof was necessary in *Christ*, and his *Apostles*, to point out his Person to the *Jews*. When the *Jews* require a sign from our Saviour; he doth not reject the enquiry, as in it self unreasonable, but made in an unreasonable manner, *i. e.* some extraordinary prodigy from Heaven; such as were done in confirmation of the Laws of *Moses*; and they would not be contented with the Miracles of our Saviour; that were far more Glorious and Divine, both for manner, and quality, than those done by *Moses*. When I affirm that Miracles were necessary to point out the Person of the *Messias*, I mean, they confirm'd his Testimony to be from God; he affirming himself to be the *Messias*, and the sacred Oracles giving this character of the *Messias*, that he should work Miracles. For we cannot think that the wisdom and goodness of God will suffer the

the utmost Seal of rational Evidence to be affixed to a Ly. The Learned *Huetius*, Huetius. hath excellently cleared the Prophecies concerning the *Messias* from all the Cavils of the *Jews*; and there was no characteristick given of him in the Prophets, more frequent, and specifick, than his working of Miracles. *Isa.* 42. 6, 7. *I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a Covenant of the People, for a light of the Gentiles; To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house.* And *Luke* 4. 18. Our Saviour tells us that the famous Prophecy of the *Messias*, *Isa.* 61. Is fulfilled in himself.

HENCE is it, that he appeals to his Miracles, as to his credential Letters from Heaven; *If I had not done amongst them the works which none else did, they had had no sin, i. e.* That of Infidelity; and again, *Believe me for the works sake.* And their unbelief is justly expos'd, in that question of our Saviour's, when he asks, *for which of those works do ye stone me.* When *John the Baptist* hearing Matth. 11.

ing of the Miracles of our Saviour, sent two of his Disciples with this question to him, *Art thou he that should come ? i. e. Art thou indeed the Messias ?* Our Saviour return'd no other answer than this, *Go, said he, and shew John again those things which you do hear and see, The blind receive their sight, the lame walk, and the dead are raised up.* The Jews themselves acknowledge, that they could not in reason expect greater Miracles to be done by the Messias, than those which they saw perform'd by our Saviour. When Christ cometh (say they) will he do more Miracles, than these which this man doth ? And Nicodemus grants, That no man can do these things, unless God be with him.

Now those Miracles are so much the more illustrious, that He not only wrought them himself, but gave power also to His Disciples, when he was ascended unto the Father, to confirm their Testimony by Miracles. And the first Ages of Christianity furnish us with many undeniable proofs ; so frequent, and so palpable were those demonstrations of the Divine Power, that multi-

multitudes of men and women were heal'd by the Apostles, only by the sincere Invocation of the *Name of Jesus*; and they, such as were past all the cure of Art, and Nature. The shadow of *S. Peter* passing by did heal many. And the Author to the *Hebrews* assures us, *That God bore them witness, with signs, and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will.* Heb. 2. 4. And the Ancients largely prosecute this Argument, that such, and so many Miracles were wrought by the Apostles; as clearly prov'd, that *Om-* Vid. Ar- nob. ad- vers. gent. *nipotence* was engag'd in their defence, and confirmed their Doctrine: When *Jupiter* and *Æsculapius* were not able to relieve any of their votaries, no not in those Diseases, that might be remov'd by the orderly application of Medicine. Thus we see that Miracles, were absolutely necessary to prove, that *He was the Great, and Glorious Messias.* And,

2. **THEY** were necessary to confound and baffle the Devil, To dispossess Satan, and break the force of his Kingdom. Now when we consider the prejudices that many entertain'd against

Y Christi-

Christianity, in its first appearance; how much the World at that time was sunk into the grossest Folly and Vanity; how contrary the Doctrine of *Jesus*; and his followers, was unto the bias of Mankind; how concern'd the Devil was, all the World over, to uphold his tottering Throne. I say, when we remember all this, and the strange opposition that the Gospel met with, we must acknowledge the great necessity of Miracles; that we may give a reasonable account of the progress of Christianity, the Power of Miracles was a palpable demonstration, that reach'd the Learn'd, and the Unlearn'd.

THE juggling tricks of *Demons*, when in competition with the useful and conspicuous Miracles of the *Apostles*, vanish'd like dreams. The Devil was not baffled so much by any thing, as by this; when he was forc'd out of all quarters, and began to yield and give ground; wherever the Christians came, he retreated with shame and confusion, at the Name of *Jesus*; his Altars fell, his Oracles were silenc'd, and his Sacrifices deserted. It was the usual method of the

the Apostles, first to work a Miracle, and then declare to the People in whose Name, and by whose Authority, they had done it. An instance whereof we have in S. Peter's curing the *Cripple*, that lay at the beautiful gate of the Temple.

W H E N we reflect upon the strange effect of their endeavours, and that such mean persons as they were should prevail upon so many both learn'd and unlearn'd; and that not only in barbarous and obscure places, but in *Rome*, *Alexandria*, and *Antioch*; and against the whole combination of the strongest prejudices that we can imagine. We must enquire into the rational account of it, which cannot be resolv'd into the evidence of the thing it self, nor unto the credit of their Testimony, but unto the undeniable Power of God, discovering it self in their miraculous Actions. It had certainly been impossible to have subdued the World to *Christ*, without it; and as impossible was it for reasonable men to resist the Evidence of such a heavenly demonstration.

T H I S Argument is prosecuted at length, by *Origen*, against *Celsus*; where he proves that the Apostles did not so much convert the World, by their Sermons, as by their Actions. When the Souls of Men were drowned in sensuality, nothing less than such a cogent demonstration, as reach'd both Soul and Body, could prevail upon them to so Heavenly a Religion. They did not put their Auditors to the trouble of making tedious enquiries, into the Nature and validity of their Testimony; but prevented all disquisitions of that kind, by this infallible Proof.

A N D what rational man could desire any other proof, than the immediate attestation of a Divine Power? Who could doubt, and dispute when he had seen the most Tyrannical and stubborn Devils dispossessed, the sick healed, and the dead raised? By this prevailing and mighty demonstration they bore away their Understandings, banish'd all their Scruples, and forced open a passage into all their Affections; by this means the Gospel prevailed so easily, and so speedily

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ly over all the World. And this Power was so vulgarly known at that time, that *S. Paul* insists upon it, as a proof of his true *Apostleship*.

Rom. 15
18.
2. Cor. 12.
12.

N O W it adds great weight unto this Argument, that the power of Miracles was not confin'd to the Apostolical Age, but was continued down to the next Age.

W H A T bold Challenges do we meet with in all the Apologetick Writings of the first Christians? Offering themselves to the Tryal, to see if the Devil be able to stand his ground, when he is commanded to retire in the Name of *Jesus*. *Justin Martyr* in his first *Apologie*, tells the *Emperor*, and *Senate*, that if they pleased they might inform themselves of our Lords power over their *Dæmons*, by what was daily done under their eyes. And *Tertullian* c. 23. of his *Apologie*, defies the Heathens in the tartest Language. Set before your Tribunals (said he) any Person that is possess'd, and let any Christian command the *Dæmon* to confess what he is, he shall confess himself to be a Devil, as he did formerly

merly pretend to be a God. And Origen, in his Book against *Celsus*, triumphs in nothing so much as this. We have (says he) such ways of demonstration, as far outstrips all your Greekish way of proof, even the demonstration of the Spirit, and of Power. To them I add

* *Cujus nomine adjurati de corporibus excedunt, quorum verbis tanquam flagris verberati, non modo demonas se esse confidentur, sed etiam nomina sua edunt, illa quæ in Templis adorantur.* And a little after, *Quia nec DEO, per quem adjurantur, nec Jufis quorum voce torquentur, mentiri possunt.*

* *Lactantius de Origine Erroris, Lib. 2. c. 15.* Where he tells us, that the Devils are afraid of them that Worship the Living God.

THIS way of Demonstration was most successful, not only to the Conviction of Mankind, but also most terrible to the Devils Kingdom. And,

3. FULLY adequate to the expectations of both *Jews* and *Gentiles*. The *Jews* could not reject this kind of proof; for they believed their own Religion, because founded by Miracles, which made the name of *Moses* so famous amongst them; and now and then it was attested by the Miracles of the following Prophets. They could not

not then reject the Miracles of our Saviour, without the grossest absurdity, and inconsistency to their own Principles.

AND as to the rest of Mankind, it could not but convince the most barbarous amongst them; their being no Principles so much received by the Light of Nature, as this, that the Author of Nature only could change and renverse at his pleasure (and to serve the ends of his Providence) the Laws of Nature. So we find the *Barbarians* in the 28. of the *Acts*, when they saw that *S. Paul shook off the Viper, that had fastened on his hand, and felt no harm*; They acknowledg'd it a Miracle, and quickly chang'd their Opinion of him. They formerly took him for a Malefactor, now they take him for a God. So deep is this sense left upon the minds of all Men, that a Miracle is a sufficient proof of Divine Authority. And now we see plainly that the demonstration of the Spirit, at the first propagation of the Gospel, was the most suitable and rational Evidence, whether for convincing the *Jews*, or confounding the

Demons of the *Gentiles*, or for the satisfaction of all Men; there was no proof more proper, none could be more successful. Therefore was it so pertinently alledg'd by our Apostle, against the foolish cavils of them that understood not the nature of such a mighty Demonstration.

I M I G H T now vindicate what I have said concerning Miracles, from the Objections of the *Jews and Pagans*, but they are so foolish and trifling, that they need not be nam'd. When they object that they were wrought by the power of *Magick*; we need no other answer, than that of our *Saviour himself*; who told them, that the *Devil* was not such a fool as to employ his power against himself, since it was undeniably manifest, that no discipline did so visibly and irreconcilably oppose all Magical Arts and Charms, as did the Religion of *Jesus*. So a great number of them that had followed those curious Arts, brought their costly Books to the Apostles and burnt them. And when they endeavour'd to alledge that equal Miracles have been done by others amongst

mongst the *Pagans*: 'Tis so idle a story, that they are far from believing it, who first invented it. The story of *Vespasian's* restoring a blind man to his sight did proceed from the artifice of *Egyptian* flattery, and is reported by his own Historians with so much diffidence and reserve, that it is scarce worth the naming. As for the prodigious feats of *Apollonius Tianeus*, we can look upon them as no other, than fictitious, and Romantick Fooleries, vouched by no competent Authority. Whereas the Miracles done by our *Saviour*, and his *Apostles*, were not only of a different Nature from those little Tricks of *Magick*; but were wrought amongst great crowds of People, to the view of the World, and acknowledg'd by the most bitter and implacable of his Enemies. And this Power he had not only in himself, but bestowed it on his *Apostles*. Besides the full discovery of those Objections, depends on so much History, that they cannot be contracted within such narrow bounds as I am confin'd to.

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THE Result of all is this, Such as despise the Gospel do it upon the most unreasonable grounds. For whereas they alledge that our Ministry was not attended with Wisdom and Proofs borrowed from Philosophy, they betray their Ignorance: For the Doctrine that we propagate and assert, being of its own Nature wholly Divine, and beyond the reach of all human enquiries, it must needs have its Proofs and Demonstrations from Heaven. Without this it could not prevail, and when it is attended with this, it is impossible that it can miss of its effect: So we come *not with the enticing words of mans wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit, and of power.* Now we find that those Miracles were necessary at the first establishment of Christianity, to point out the Person of the *Messias*, to baffle the Devil, and to satisfy the expectations of all Men, and that thus rationally we can give an account of the speedy and universal propagation of the Christian Religion.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, We consider the design, and scope of this Oeconomy. That their Faith might be built on the surest Foundations, *i. e.* on the Power of God. And here I might reckon up the motives of Credibility, that obliged us to assent to the Christian Religion. (if they can be numbered) But I chuse to improve what is said in one Word of Application.

Blessed be God, who hath so fully provided for our Illumination, and Confirmation, that we might rest in his Word and Testimony, with full assurance of mind: For the Apostles *did not follow cunningly devised fables*, when they made known unto us the Power and Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Let us give up our selves to it, without wavering and hesitation of Spirit, resolutely maintaining it, even unto Death: And above all endeavouring to adorn it by a Holy Conversation, *adding to our faith, vertue; to vertue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance, &c.* Let us esteem and love it, for its genuine Grandure, and Majesty, even when it
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is not attended with the Ornaments of human Art. For *how shall we escape, if we neglect so great a Salvation*, that was first confirm'd by Miracles and Wonders?

LET us not desire, that supernatural Truths be recommended to us chiefly, and only by human Art. So weak are we that we relish not Heavenly things, unless they smell of the Earth. When we hear the Word of God, the corruption of our Nature leads us to notice more the air, accent, and gesture of the Preacher than the great Truths that he recommends; and all these be they never so plain, innocent, and unexceptionable; they have their fate and censure, not from our unbiassed reason, but from that part of us that is carnal. I am not of the opinion that the Mysteries of the Gospel are to be handled confusedly, and negligently, in a slovenly dress, such garments become not the Majesty of that Religion, whose Ministers we are. The Oracles of God deserve that we should Meditate in them, night and day. But we are so to study them
that

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that we preach not our selves, but Christ
Jesus the Lord, and our selves your
Servants for Christs sake, that we may
not think that the success of our La-
bours depends on the skill and con-
trivance of our Composures, but on
God that giveth the Increase.

*To God the Father, Son and Holy
Ghost, be Glory and Domini-
on, for ever. Amen.*

A

The first of these is the
 fact that the number of
 cases of the disease has
 increased in the last few
 years. This is due to the
 fact that the disease is
 becoming more common in
 the population.

The second fact is that the
 disease is becoming more
 severe in its effects. This
 is due to the fact that the
 disease is becoming more
 common in the population.

The third fact is that the
 disease is becoming more
 difficult to treat. This is
 due to the fact that the
 disease is becoming more
 common in the population.

The fourth fact is that the
 disease is becoming more
 difficult to prevent. This
 is due to the fact that the
 disease is becoming more
 common in the population.

The fifth fact is that the
 disease is becoming more
 difficult to control. This
 is due to the fact that the
 disease is becoming more
 common in the population.

The sixth fact is that the
 disease is becoming more
 difficult to cure. This is
 due to the fact that the
 disease is becoming more
 common in the population.

The seventh fact is that the
 disease is becoming more
 difficult to manage. This
 is due to the fact that the
 disease is becoming more
 common in the population.

A
S E R M O N

Preached at the
ABBEY of *Holy-Rood-House*,
MAY, 1686.

O N
M A T T. V. V. 20.

*For I say unto you, that except your
righteousness shall exceed the righte-
ousness of the Scribes and Pharisees,
ye shall in no case enter into the king-
dom of heaven.*

MY design from these words
of our *Saviour*, is, to hint
shortly at the Scope and
Drift of *Christian Religion*;
and then to state the comparison be-
tween it, and the *Pharisaical Religion*;
And

And in the next place to direct you in the Practice of true and sincere Godliness.

ROM. 7. WHEN our *Saviour* appeared, the *Church* was sadly over-run with the grossest Immoralities, and the most absurd Superstitions and Delusions. The Law of God, which was in it self pure, and just, and holy, was perverted by their Commentaries; and made to truckle under such designs, as were hateful to God, and subversive of all true Morality. Their plausible glosses, and corrupt maxims, destroy'd the natural force of Religion, and withal they deceiv'd the poor People into an Opinion, that they themselves were the peculiar favourites of God; even then, when our *Saviour* told them, that the *publicans* and the *sinners* should enter into the kingdom of heaven before them.

WHEN we read the *Sermon* on the Mount, we find, that it was our *Saviour's* great design to plant, and establish amongst his Disciples, a manly, rational and heroick temper of mind; a higher kind of Philosophy, than the *Pharisees* under-

understood, or the *Pagans* pretended to. The rule of Life that he gave us was so accurate, and so suitable to our Nature, in its first and original constitution, that nothing can equal it for purity and holiness. The wisest sayings, and the best thoughts of *Jews* and *Pagans*, scattered here and there in all their books, are very far outdone in one *Page* of the *New Testament*. He removes our errors, prejudices and mistakes, concerning God, our selves, and the rewards of another Life. He opens our eyes to see thorow the little tricks, hypocritical designs, and superstitious follies of the *Pharisees*. And by the most cogent proofs he forces us to acknowledge, that there is no Religion so worthy of God to reveal, so proper for us to be taught in, as that system of true Piety, and unaffected Morality, that he has brought to Light.

WHEN I say *Morality*, I do not understand Morality, in the usual lame and defective signification of it, as it regards our outward behaviour towards Man: But rather the whole of our profound submission, and obedience to the

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first and second Table of the Law. And in this true and comprehensive notion, I affirm, that it was our *Saviour's* design to advance it unto practice, and reputation amongst Mankind.

THE *Jewish* Religion (take it all together) was rather Gods indulgence and toleration, than his law and commandment. And tho it had the Seal of his Authority; yet it was not in it self the best Religion, but the best that they could bear. When they returned from *Ægypt*, the impressions of their servitude were not so soon worn off, but that their proneness to Idolatry, and former slavish dispositions remain'd. And ever and anon upon all occasions (for a long time after) they relapse into their superstitions, and *Ægyptian* Ceremonies.

IF we view them in the best periods of the *Jewish* Oeconomy, their Religion was defective. Many things were plainly permitted, or tacitely conniv'd at, (as *Polygamy* and *Divorce*, and some degrees of *uncharitableness*, and *revenge*) which natural and uncorrupted reason dislikes
and

and condemns. But when *Our Saviour* appear'd, it was then high time to recover the World from their beggarly elements; and to give us the true notions of Almighty God; the spirituality of his Worship; and the extent of his universal Empire over *Jew* and *Gentile*; and to form our manners by that accurate rule of his Doctrine, and Example: By which we were not only assured of Eternal Life, but partly (in a manner) put in the possession of it. A scheme of Christian Morals is given us in the *Sermon* on the *Mount*, so pure and angelical, that at first view, we are forc'd to acknowledge that *it came down from the Father of lights*. We are ^{Philip. 4.} exhorted to *whatsoever things are true; 8. honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report; if there be any vertue, and if there be any-praise, to think on these things.*

To advance and facilitate the practice of this Morality, was the design of our *Saviour's* undertaking, when we consider the Gospel in its uniform strength and vigour, as also to calm the consciences of men; to remove our fears; and to teach us to approach the Throne

of God, with a generous assurance of mind; to bind us in the strongest bonds of Society amongst our selves, and to liberate us from the yoke of *Moses Law*. This was our Saviour's business when he took upon him our Nature, *when we beheld his glory, the glory, as of the only begotten of the Father, full of Grace, and Truth.*

Joh. 1. 14.

I. I SAY, one great part of his design was, to form us into true Morals. This is the comprehensive character by which good men are distinguished in the Holy Scriptures. *In this the Children of God are manifest, and the Children of the Devil, whosoever doth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.* Thus runs the description of Job, that *he was a man perfect and upright, one that feared God, and eschewed evil.*

1 Joh. 3. 10.

Job, 1. 1.

Psal. 15.

AND David's religious man walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart. The great character of Moses was, that he was very meek, above all the men upon the face of the Earth. And Cornelius the

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the Centurion, is said to be a devout *man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the People, and prayed to God alway.* Acts, 10.^{1.}

BUT all along the New Testament, the *Pharisees* are *stigmatiz'd*, that they were cold and indifferent in the great Morals of Religion, while they were very zealous, and pragmatick to advance the rituals of it. They were *blind guides, who strain'd at a Gnat, and swallowed a Camel. They tithed Mint, Annise, and Cummin, and neglected the weightier matters of the Law.*

WHEN the whole of Religion is summ'd up in the most compendious manner, there is nothing else nam'd but *the love of God, and our neighbour*: Or, the most ingenuous expressions of both. *What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God.* And our Saviour tells us, *that on the Love of God and our neighbour, hangs all the Law and Prophets.* And this is the same Doctrine that is preached by S. Paul, *for Love is the fulfilling of the Law.* And therefore

Mich. 6.8.

Isa. I. 16,

17, 18.

Matth. 22.

4.

we find that the Prophets, upon all occasions, did endeavour to withdraw the thoughts of the *Jews* from the External drudgery of their Religion, to that Immortal Deity that was Worshiped; and to convince them that if their Sacrifices were not attended with the Love of God and their Neighbour, they could not be acceptable: The blood of Bulls, and of Goats, was no entertainment for him that made Heaven and Earth. A Soul disengaged from the corruptions of Life, and animated in all its actions with true zeal and sincerity, was the only acceptable Sacrifice.

AND the Rituals of Christianity (if they are destitute of their true Spirit and Life) are of no greater value. *Our Faith without works is dead*, in the language of S. James. And S. Peter compares our *Baptism* (if separated from Purity of Manners) *to the washing of Swine*. And our Communicating without Devotion, is by S. Paul said to be *our coming together to condemnation*. It is the pure heart, and clean hands, the modest and ingenuous temper of Spirit,

Jam. 2. 20.
2. Pet. 2.
22.

Spirit, that perfume our Faith, our Prayers, and our Assemblies. When we look into the *New Testament*, this Doctrine runs through all its parts, and breaths almost in every Line, *the Grace of God* Tit. 2. 11. *that bringeth Salvation, hath appeared unto all Men, teaching us, that denying ungodliness, and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, looking for the blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purifie unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works.* And, for this very purpose *the Son of God* 1. Joh. 3. *was manifested that he might destroy the works of the Devil.*

I N all ages men have endeavoured to cross, and oppose this part of our Saviour's design, and to reconcile (by little distinctions, plausible, and artificial tricks) their Religion to their Lusts. Some Religion they must have, and that which renders them truly acceptable unto God, penetrates too deep into the Soul, searches the Hearts and Reins, and teaches them to live in opposition

to the corrupt Spirit of the World, and to lead captive secret thoughts and imaginations unto the obedience of Christ. The impressions of the Divinity are folded up in the Soul of Man; the apprehensions and fears of an after reckoning, haunt us whether we will or not. Therefore they must needs invent a Religion, that is calculated to serve their designs, and to silence the troublesome alarms of their mind. *But be not you deceived, God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.* Our Saviour set himself to undeceive the World in this great affair; and to remove the Pharisaical paint and varnish from the Law, and to let us understand, that our God is not an Idol, that he values no Sacrifices, but such as resemble his Nature: For he is a Spirit, and must be worshiped in Spirit, and in Truth,

2. A S E C O N D part of our Saviour's design was, to give true repose and tranquillity to the Spirits of Men. *Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.* The inward disorder of our Spirits is the cause of all our trouble; when the Light of

Matth. II.
28.

of the Gospel removes our Errors, and by its beams warms our affections, the day-star from on high ariseth in our breasts ; our fears and dreadful apprehensions are over ; and there is a perfect calm and tranquillity. One great instruction in our *Saviour's Commission*, was, *to bind up the broken hearted*. The Souls of Men are at variance with themselves, until they are united unto God. He fixes their Spirits in their operations and choice, and creates within them that harmony and peace, *which the World cannot give them*. Then they are arm'd against all events and disasters ; they are like a Rock of Adamant immoveable against the most tempestuous waves and storms ; the winds may blow, and the storms may threaten, and beat upon the Rock with the loudest roarings, but they are quickly beat back into froth and disappointment. *The righteous are like mount Zion which cannot be mov'd*.

T H A T it was a part of our *Saviour's* design to establish this tranquillity of Spirit, appears from this very Sermon on the Mount, where he endeavours by so many arguments, to fortifie
us

us against all fears, discouragements, and solicitude. The Wisdom of God levelld the strongest arguments against the most desperate diseases; and therefore, the Doctrine of the Gospel in all its branches hath an admirable tendency to create this peace. When we believe that all things are ordered and dispos'd by an universal, infinitely wise, unlimited, and active Providence; With what acquiescence, and serenity of Spirit may we give up all things to his conduct and government? *Not a hair of your head falleth to the ground without his pleasure.* The nature and frame of all the Graces of the Spirit, the whole spiritual furniture of the Gospel naturally lead to peace, love, joy, and meekness. We are assured, *that all things work together for good to them that love God; Even our light afflictions, that endure but for a moment, work for us a far more exceeding, and eternal weight of glory.* And the belief of this establishes the mind against all the shakings of adversity. And we may add to all the former considerations, that we are frequently exhorted to *place our affections on the things that are above; to leave this World (its*
hurry

Col. 3. 2.

hurry and noise) and to get above it in our affections; and to view with satisfaction and ease (amidst our lowest depreffions) that Country that is above.

3. ANOTHER part of our Saviour's design was, to unite us together in the straitest bonds of humane society. In order to which he hath made Love the badge and character of his profession; So exactly fulfilling the Prophecies concerning the *Messias*, that in his days *the Wolf should dwell with the Lamb, the Leopard, and the Kid should ly down together.* i. e. that the fierceness of human Nature should be banish'd, and all the rugged and uneven excrescencies of passion, the boisterous swellings of humour should be filed off. *John the Baptist*, told, *that every valley should be fill'd, and every mountain brought low, the crooked should be made straight, and the rough ways should be made smooth,* i. e. All injustice, fraud, and oppression, all pride, hypocrisie and violence, should give place unto everlasting righteousness; every one should keep his own post, and move in his own Orb, with con-

contentment and sobriety. Hence Servants are exhorted not to repine at their condition; for as the members of the body natural must hold their distance and situation, so must the members of the body political.

4. **ANOTHER** part of his design was to liberate us from the Yoke of *Moses Law*. I only name this particular, I will not insist on it at present.

Now if the design of Christian Religion was to restore true morality, the image of God, humility, patience, the love of God, and contempt of the World, and to discover the hypocrisie and wickedness of the *Pharisees*: Let us then enquire.

In the Second place, **IN** what instances the Pharisaical Religion did cross the Christian; and we shall discover the manifest opposition of the one to the other. When we consider

1: **THE** Vices, that they were most addicted to.

2. **THE**

2. **T H E** Prejudices, that they were blinded with.

3. **T H E** Maxims, and shifts that they espous'd into their Doctrine, to defend their wickedness, and immoralities.

1. **D O** but consider the Vices, that they were most addicted to. Pride, contrary to the humility of the Gospel. Avarice, in opposition to that contempt of the World that our *Saviour* taught. Hypocrisie, that overthrows the ingenuity recommended, and enjoyn'd by our Religion. Revenge, Cruelty, and Rebellion, contrary to the Loyalty, Meekness, and Obedience of *our most holy Faith*. We are inform'd by *Joseph* Antiq. 17. (though he was himself much addicted to the Sect of the *Pharisees*) that *they were a crafty and subtile generation of men, and so perverse even to Princes themselves, that they would not fear manytimes openly to affront them.* They had a mighty ascendent over the People, and by their long prayers, superstitious tricks, and disfigur'd faces, they got the

the Rable once of their side, and by their interest in the multitude, they became terrible to the Governours.

Joseph,

Alexander Jannæus, when he lay a dying, advis'd his *Queen* not to irritate and displease the *Pharisees*; and told her plainly, that *this was the very thing that deriv'd the Odium of the Nation upon him, that he had comply'd so little with that restless and pragmatick Generation.*

IF the Vices of the *Pharisees* prevail amongst the Christians, what a reproach is it unto us, and to our Religion? When we remember that *we are to obey for Conscience sake.* We may easily see that there is nothing more opposite to Christianity than Rebellion. And this very Sect amongst the *Jews* strove to advance their Religious Tyranny above the *Highest Powers*; as if they had been bred near the *Infalible Chair*, or a *General Assembly.* Many *Popes* declar'd it to be of necessity to Salvation, to every humane Creature to be subject to the *Roman Pontiff*; and the instances are many as they are undeniable. Therefore we are smoothly told by some of them,

Greg. the
7th. Inno-
cent the
3d. And
Boniface
the 8th.
Vide Acts
of the
Gen. As-
semb.
1649.

them, that this is not matter of Faith, but Discipline. I confess it is Discipline, and that of the severest kind for a *King* to be depos'd, and sent to a Monastery as *Childerick* was. And the power by which this was done, is said by *Bellarmino* to be acknowledg'd *communī catholicorum sententiā*; and I think, that he understood their Doctrine as well as any other.

BUT the Genius of this Sect among the *Jews* will appear.

2. IF we consider the Prejudices wherewith they were blinded, and which kept them from believing our *Saviour* to be the *Messias*. Now, lest I should seem to make up an account of their prejudices against our *Saviour* that is purely imaginary; I shall confine my Narration only to the *New Testament*. And,

1. THE *Pharisees* valued themselves on the Authority of *Moses Chair*. And this they magnify'd to that height, that they impos'd their dictates on all men for infallible Oracles. The People (they thought)

thought) should receive their Opinions without scruple or hesitation. They only understood the Law, and the true meaning of it; and if any had been at any time so daring and presumptuous, as to question their Skill and Integrity, he was presently Excommunicated. This was the severest Tyranny over Mens Consciences; not to see with those Eyes that God gave them was very hard: And yet those very Men, that valued themselves on the Authority of *Moses Chair*, declar'd sitting in Council from that very *Chair*, that our *Saviour* was an *Impostor*. So we have the Church in her Sovereign representatives erring with a witness.

Matth. 23: 8, 9, 10. BUT our blessed Redeemer reasoned men into the belief of his Doctrine. It was with an eye to this pretended Infallibility, that our *Saviour* forbad his Disciples to be called Rabbi, Father, or Master upon the Earth. We cannot think that ever he design'd to take away the distinctions of Order and civil Dependence: (for there is no institution that establishes the subordination of inferiour degrees, upon such
sure

sure and lasting Foundations as *Ours* doth.) Yet, in the place lately cited he reproveth the imperious Vanity of them that requir'd a blind and implicate Obedience to their Command, that would oblige the People to receive all that they say without Examination or Tryal; and if any of his Disciples would set up for a Rabbi, or Master in that sense; he tells them plainly, that it was inconsistent with the weakness and dependance of humane Nature, *for one was their Master even Christ.*

A SECOND Prejudice against our Saviour and his Doctrine, was the Opinion of their own Tradition, which they affirmed to have been deriv'd from *Moses*, together with the written Law; and these Traditions they multiply'd unto infinite fancies, and scrupulosities. So that their Religion now became an intolerable burthen to their memories. When any ventur'd to transgress their Traditions, they persecuted him with spite and indignation. *S. Paul* tells us of himself, that when he was a *Pharisee*, *he was zealous of the Traditions of the Fathers; and that he thought himself*

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obliged to do many things against the name of Jesus.

Matth. 15.
2, 3.

Mark 7.
8, 9.

WHEN they saw the Disciples of our Saviour transgressing their little rules and observances, they rudely quarrel with him; and asked, *Why do thy Disciples transgress the Tradition of the Elders?* And our Saviour answered, *why do you also transgress the Commandment of God by your Tradition?* And with the same severity he again reproves their Superstition, *For laying aside the Commandment of God, ye hold the Tradition of men.* As if he had said, you pretend by your Traditions to explain the Law, but your Commentaries make it not only more dark and intricate, but entirely overthrow it; and instead of solving one difficulty, you create a thousand. And such Reproofs as these are frequently mixt with our Saviour's Sermons. We are not to understand the universal Traditions of the Jewish Church, than which there cannot be a better evidence of a matter of Fact; but we are here to understand the particular Doctrines that creep'd into the Church, in its last and more degenerate periods,

periods, by which men promoted their private Ambition, and impos'd their peceliar Tenents with no other design, than to raise their own Reputation, upon the ruins of Gods Law and Authority.

A THIRD Prejudice was their Doctrine of Dispensations. And this was indeed one of their most pernicious maxims by which they weakened the strength of the Law upon Mens Consciences. Our Saviour took notice of this gross abuse obliquely in the verse before my Text : And more directly reproves it in the Gospel of S. Mark. S. Mark 7. Their Doctrine of the *Corban* was the most unnatural, and hellish contrivance, that ever was hatched under the pretence of their Vow and Religion to deferre their Parents; as if the obligations of Nature were to be shaken off, and evacuated, by the ties and engagements of Religion; as if we could not be Religious in an eminent degree, unless first we renounc'd humanity and tenderness. When Religion undermines its own foundation, then it becomes the saddest and most incurable Disease.

Christianity rectifies the disorders of our Nature, and yet some Christians pretend Religion to authorize the most barbarous villanies; and have invented little arts, and knavish subterfuges to hide their hypocrisie and design, under the vizard of Religion.

Jer. 7. 4.

4. A FOURTH Prejudice against the Simplicity of our *Saviour's* Doctrine and Appearance, was the splendor of their outward Worship and Ceremonies. They doated on the *Temple of Jerusalem*, and thought that God had confin'd his favour peculiarly to that place. So they look upon the Fabrick of it with Transport and Admiration, *The Temple of the Lord, The Temple of the Lord are these.* And it seems that our *Saviour's* Disciples looked on the the *Temple* with more than ordinary fondness; when he told them, that *there should not a stone of it be left upon another.* There were three things in this Religion, that dazl'd mens eyes, and enchanted their affections. 1. The outward Pomp, and Splendor of it. 2. The Severities of some outward observances. And 3. Their corrupt Maxims,

ims, by which they forc'd their Religion (contrary to its original purity) to comply with their Lusts; and all these things made it a Religion wholly opposite to the Christian.

I MIGHT name their pride and uncharitableness towards all that differ'd from them; their superstitious niceness in little things, in tithing Mint, Anise, and Cummin; and their mighty Zeal to make Profelytes. All which are over and over again reprov'd in the *New Testament*.

NOW when they stood upon such unreasonable prejudices; and defended their Doctrines by little distinctions, and maxims of their own invention; They could not but be proof against the Doctrine and Miracles of our *blessed Saviour*. 1. They taught, that if men obeyed the Law externally, they need not trouble themselves, with the reformation of the heart. And with regard to this pernicious Maxim, our *Saviour* tells us in the Text, *that except our righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees,*

we shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven. We could not exceed the Pharisees in that kind of Religion, to which they were most addicted: And therefore our Religion must needs be of another stamp entirely, *pure, gentle, easie to be intreated, full of good works without partiality, and without hypocrisie.*

2. They thought that they might compensate for moral Miscarriages, by long prayers, and bodily severities. And they would gladly submit to any thing, rather than reform what ought to be truly amended. 3. They believ'd they might merit eternal Life by the observation of one Precept; though they liv'd in the habitual contempt, and violation of all the rest. Such a Precept they took their *Sabbath* to be.

WHEN we view the pure, and unaffected complexion of our Religion, how great an Enemy it is to all unworthy shifts and disguises; how generous and refin'd, above that Spirit that prevails in the World; how amiable in the Eyes of God and Men; then I say, we may easily perceive, that there is nothing more opposite unto it, than
that

that peevish superstition and hypocrisie, that prevail'd in the *Jewish Church* when our *Saviour* appear'd. And to the end that we may feel the force of our Religion to the best advantages : Let us observe the following Directions.

I. WE must understand our Religion thorowly ; and fix it in our Souls ^{Directions.} by the most accurate, and serious consideration. For though the motives of Christianity be of that moment, that they may easily conquer our Souls ; yet, unless they are duly applyed by Thought, Reason, and Meditation, they loose their force and efficacy ; and they never impart to us the least degree of spiritual courage and activity. God assaults our Reason in the first place, and when we are overcome by Argument, we are then a *willing People* ; we are Subjects by our choice, and not by constraint : Therefore are we frequently to view and consider the motives, and arguments of our Religion, and weigh them in the balance, against the difficulties that oppose us. That when we have examin'd, and seriously debated whatsoever makes for or against

our being Christians; we may go forth to meet our Enemy, with spiritual furniture and strength. Shall the World and its trifling Interests (notwithstanding that we are convinc'd of its emptiness and vanity) take up so many of our Thoughts? And shall we forget our immortal Souls, and the Judgment to come? Religion enters the Soul by Meditation, and no Man can be Religious, but by the acts of his Mind. It is a reasonable service that we are call'd to, and to make us continue in it with delight, our Reason must be first engag'd. How necessary this consideration is, our Saviour represents in the Gospel of S. Luke, *What King goeth out to war, doth not first sit down and consider, if with his ten thousand he be able to meet him that comes against him with twenty thousand.* Or if a man resolve to build a Tower, he first computes the expence and then he builds.

Luke.

SUCH as are hastily engag'd in the service of Religion, are frequently forc'd to retire with shame and dishonour. And this is the usual result of rash and unfettled purposes, which men make in the

the heat of their passion, and under the power of some transient conviction.

2. WE are always to prefer the *Directi-*
 Morals of Religion to its lesser Ap-^{ons.}
 pendages, and Ceremonies; and to re-
 member that the last, are only sub-
 servient to advance the first. True
 Christian Life is the Transcript of the
 Divine Nature; *Be ye holy, as I am* *I Pet. I.*
holy. And again, *Be ye merciful, as* *15, 16.*
your Father in heaven is merciful. *Matth.* There
 are such legible impressions of the
 Divine Nature felt in the Souls of
 the Regenerate, that they attract his
 presence, they are his peculiar habita-
 tions where he fixes his residence.
 Nothing so enlarges the Spirit of a Man,
 as to fix his eyes on the Life of *Jesus*,
 to view with attention and delight,
 how much he was above the World,
 when environ'd with its terrors and
 flatteries. He spoke of the invisible
 things, as one does of his own Country.
 He reason'd men out of their folly, by
 all the force, and weight of Heaven
 and Eternity. And if we allow him
 to speak to our Consciences, it is not
 possible to resist his reasonings. *He went*
about

about doing good. He made himself accessible to us by the interposal of his humanity ; that we might see as well as hear the beauties of Christian Religion. He taught us a Doctrine that is exactly calculated to refine our Nature ; to make us better in all relations. And by this rule we are to examine the different pretences of all divided Parties. If they advance by the plainest and nearest methods, true Piety, Innocency and Simplicity, and propagate them in the Spirit of Love, Unity and Subordination ; this is the surest mark to know that they belong to the Household of Faith.

3. WE are here but *Pilgrims and Strangers*, we are so to demean our selves, as Candidates for Eternity. Our Christian Life is but a flight from the World, and the more we are alienated from the Spirit that prevails in it ; the more ripe we are for that incorruptible inheritance that is reserv'd for us. Let us make the things of another World present to our selves by Faith, *For the fashion of this World passeth away.* And we are shortly to appear before Gods Tribunal,

Tribunal, stript naked of all the thin cobwebs and excuses, whereby we endeavour'd to hide our deformities upon Earth.

4. And lastly, W H E N you have deliberately resolv'd, consider the evil of back-sliding and its dreadful consequences. There are but few, who plainly and openly deny the Faith unto which they are Baptized; yet, many hundreds deny the Lord that bought them, by their wicked Lives and unchristian Practices. *Now the just shall live by* Heb. 10. *Faith; but if any man draw back, my* 38, 39. *Soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back into perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the Soul.*

To God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, be all Glory, Praise and Dominion, for ever. Amen.

The First Chapter

It is the first chapter of the book, and it is the first chapter of the first book. It is the first chapter of the first book, and it is the first chapter of the first book.

And it is the first chapter of the first book, and it is the first chapter of the first book. It is the first chapter of the first book, and it is the first chapter of the first book.

Five

It is the first chapter of the first book, and it is the first chapter of the first book. It is the first chapter of the first book, and it is the first chapter of the first book.

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SERMON

Preached on

Whitsunday, 1688.

O N

A C T S ii. v. 1, 2, 3, 4.

And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.

And

And there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.

And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

THE Christian Church, from the Ascension of our Blessed Saviour into Heaven until the Effusion of the *Holy Ghost* upon the Apostles, was full of great expectations and great fears; they had not yet quite broke off from the Communion of the Jewish Church; yet they continued in their solitude and retirements, and in the true exercise of Charity and Patience, until our Saviour should scatter his Royal Donatives upon his solemn and magnificent entrance into the Heavens. By which Gifts and Graces the Apostles were enabled to assert the Truth of our Religion boldly; and proclaim the glad tidings of Salvation to all Nations

The Eleventh Sermon.

367

Nations ; and the *Literal Judaism* was to give place to the *Mystical* ; and the *Messias* was not only to be *the Glory of his people Israel*, but a *Light to lighten the Gentiles*.

OUR Saviour after his Resurrection gave all assurance to the Apostles, that he would send them *another Comforter*, when *He was gone unto the Father*, an Advocate to plead his Cause successfully ; one who should inspire them with strength and skill to defie and resist all the Calumnies and Slanders of Infidelity ; and therefore they ought not to give way either to grief, sorrow, or despondency. For, all Power in Heaven and in Earth was given to their Lord and Master : He was highest in the Glory of the Father : He was not only declared to be the *Son of God by his Resurrection* Phil. 2. from the dead, but *God did highly ex- 9, 10. alt him*, and gave him a Name which is above every Name, that at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in Heaven, and things in Earth, and things under the Earth. He instructed them formerly in the Spiritual Oeconomy of his Kingdom, that they need-
ed

Luke 24.

ed not be ashamed of the Doctrine of the Croſs, that it behov'd *Chriſt to ſuffer, and to riſe from the dead the third day*; to the end that repentance and remiſſion of ſins ſhould be preached in his Name, *throughout all Nations, beginning at Jeruſalem*; and withal, that He was not unmindful of his Promiſe that He made before He was crucified, *now that he was riſen from the dead*; but He aſſured them He would ſend the *Promiſe of the Father* upon them, ſo much to their comfort, ſucceſs and ſatisfaction, that the whole World ſhould take notice of it. In the mean time they were to remain quiet, and knit together at *Jeruſalem*, until this Promiſe was fulfilled.

John 20.
21, 22, 23. HE had before at their Ordination, and formal Admiſſion into the higheſt Order of the Church, *breathed on them, and bad them receive the Holy Ghoſt*. By the which they were inveſted with a Legal and Authoritative Title to act as the Ambaſſadors of Jeſus Chriſt; to proclaim his Laws, to require the Obedience of all Nations, to convey this Power unto others, to erect a new Society diſtinct from

from all Secular Incorporations, to bind and loose by the Censures of the Church; but still, notwithstanding of their Authority they remain'd without strength, until the solemn and magnificent Effusion of the *Holy Ghost*, by which their Tongues being fired from Heaven, their opposers were not able to resist the Wisdom by which they spake. Now, was the Prophecy of *Joel* fulfilled in the highest sense; and so *S. Peter* applies it to this astonishing and heavenly manifestation; *And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will poure out of my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesie, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams.* Acts 2: 16, 17.

THERE are who distinguish in the Writings of the New Testament, between the *Holy Ghost* and the *Spirit*; and that the *Spirit* signifies the Power of Miracles, healing the Sick, casting out of Devils, restoring sight to the Blind, raising the Dead, by all which our Saviour proved himself to be the true *Messias*: And by the *Holy Ghost*, they think we ought to understand the wonderful

Gifts of Utterance, of Languages, of Interpretation of Myſteries, by which the Apoſtles were enabled in a moment to confound all the arts and oppoſitions of their enemies, to run down with evidence all the calumnies and reproaches invented either by *Jew* or *Gentile*, againſt the Perſon, Life, Doctrine or Miracles of our bleſſed Saviour.

BUT we ſhall have a better view of this, when we fix our Meditations on that part of Scripture that I have read, and conſider it in all its mutual aſpects and relations, then I will endeavour to gather the ſeveral Branches of it together again in the Application.

WE find that the Apoſtles did exactly obey the Command of our Saviour, they tarried at *Jeruſalem waiting for the promiſe of the Father*. The Text hath in it the accompliſhment of this Promiſe, and becauſe it is ſo peculiar to this day to commemorate the Effuſion of the *Holy Ghoſt*, with the higheſt Joy and Gratitude, I will invite your attention to theſe three Particulars in the words that I have read.

I. THE

1. **THE** disposition that the Apostles were in to receive the *Holy Ghost*, *they were all with one accord in one place.*

2. **THE** sensible Emblem of it manifested, 1. To their Ears in the second Verse; and to their Eyes in the third Verse. And,

3. **HERE** is the Accomplishment of the Promise, the success and the appearance of it; *they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, they began to speak with other Tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.*

1. Consider the Disposition that they were in to receive it. *They were all with one accord in one place.* The Holy Spirit cannot dwell in those Breasts that are gangreen'd with discords, jars and animosities. All our wild passions and unfriendly humours must be hush'd into silence at the approach of this heavenly Guest; he chuses for his residence & habitation those pure and innocent Souls that breath nothing but love, candor, simplicity and meekness: the secret retirements of

the Mind where he dwells must be made smooth, even, and regular: the rugged and intricate circuits of Hypocrisie, Hatred and Envy, are inconsistent with his Presence. He loves to fix his residence where there are some beautiful Lineaments of himself. The peaceableness, the charity, the mutual love and zeal of promoting the welfare of one another was so remarkable in the first Christians, that we must needs confess they were acted by a Spirit beyond the World: this peace, and love and unanimity is so essential to the Christian Religion, that our Saviour made it the badge and Character of his Disciples, *hereby shall all men know that you are my disciples, if ye love one another.* It is the fulfilling of the Law, without it there is no access for our Prayers. We are commanded, when we bring our gift to the Altar, to leave it there unoffered, until we are reconciled to our brother. And we are directed by the Apostle St. Paul, to lift up holy hands without wrath or doubting. In a word, the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, easie to be intreated, full of mercy, and good fruits, without partiality, and without

John.

Matth. 5.
23, 24, 25.

Jam. 3. 17.

out

out hypocrisie. And a little before he telleth us, that *bitter envyings and strife* are the Companions of that *wisdom that is earthly, sensual and devilish.* Nay, this Hatred and Enmity makes up the very nature of the Devil, and if you could divide him and his Malice, he were no more a Devil, nor opposite to God : for *God is Love, and they that dwell in God dwell in Love* ; and the frequent repetitions of Love, in the first Epistle of *St. John*, give us to understand, that the Love of God and his Neighbour did actuate and enliven his Soul to the highest warmth and Charity.

WHEN we look upon the Apostles in this interval between Christs Ascension, and the effusion of the *Holy Ghost*, before they proclaim'd (boldly and openly) *the wonderful things of God* in the name of *Jesus*, before they came forth with displayed Banners against the Kingdom of darkness, then it was that their Unity did miraculously support them, and what degrees of chearfulness and courage were found in any of them, came seasonably to the relief of every one upon all occasions. Their Unity

first strengthened their Prayers, they went up to Heaven as the Evening Sacrifice, and with united force prevailed. The Prayers of those Souls that are knit in Charity soon fly to the Ears of God, they are raised above the Skies on the wings of fervent Love; the Devotions that are harmoniously poured forth on Earth, resound with an *Eccho* in the Heavens, as if the Inhabitants of the upper and the lower World had begun already the most intimate friendship and familiar Converse.

2. THEIR Unity among themselves filled their Souls with great Tranquillity, and though they were not yet actually inspired as afterwards they were with the gifts of the *Holy Ghost*; yet by their unanimity they were so prepared for them, and thirsted after them, as the parched and gasping Earth thirsts for the showers of the latter Rain.

3. THIS Unity had with it also some foretastes of the joys of Heaven. Those triumphant Spirits that are above are twisted together in the mutual Embraces of Love, it is their Element where they

they move, it is the life of their Soul, they cannot live without it either here or hereafter,

4. THIS Unity dispos'd the Apostles, and the Disciples to a clearer understanding of the truths of the Kingdom of Heaven. Truth is the true nourishment of the Mind, and this Truth enters not in its force and influence, unless the Soul is first alienated from all harsh, rugged and ill-natured Passions; Proud and unmortified Men may make a great ostentation of Wisdom and Knowledge, but the truth all this time is not successfully united to the essence of the Mind, and the retirements of the Conscience; though the words that convey it to our Ears may be lodg'd in the memory and imagination; when we come to know the Truth in its divine energy and strength, then *are we made free from sin, and hereby we know that we know him, if we keep his Commandments.*

Now the Apostles locked themselves up from the noise of the World, and felt those invisible supports of Faith and Love, when as yet they had not cou-

rage enough to venture abroad, but Unity cannot long be preserved without uniformity, and therefore they are said not only to be of one accord, but also in one place.

Cant.

THE Order and Discipline of the Catholick Church into which we are received by Baptism, oblige not only to inward peace, but also to an outward Decorum, and visible Uniformity. The Church in the language of Solomon is beautiful as Tirzah, comely as Jerusalem, terrible as an Army with banners. The comprehensive Apostolick Canon is, *that all things be done with decency and in order*; and therefore are we exhorted by the Author to the Hebrews, *not to forsake the assembling of our selves together as the manner of some is, i.e.* We are not to erect Altar against Altar, but to continue in the Communion of the Christian Church, observing those Laws and Rules, by which the spiritual Society of Christs Family has been best preserved in the times of greatest danger and persecution. If we cut our selves off from Christs mystical Body, the consequences are fatal and dreadful.

THE

THE publick Worship of the Sanctuary is Christs Trophy over his Enemies; his Standard erected and set up in those very places where the Devil had his Altars; are not his Oracles now silenced, and his Sacrifices deserted, where our Saviour is acknowledged King and Sovereign? Is not the publick Worship the very joy of our hearts, as the Prophet foretold, *Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths.* See with what fervour the best of Gods Servants pray for it, and with what satisfaction they speak of it; *Pity (saith Daniel) thy Sanctuary that is desolate for the Lords sake.* And the Psalmist, *Thy servants take pleasure in her very stones, and favour the dust thereof.* And again, *I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord, our feet shall stand within thy gate, O Jerusalem.*

How hateful then are they to God, and how contrary to the Spirit and design of the Gospel, who destroy the publick

lick Worship, and the uniform Meetings of Christs Family upon Earth by Faction, Mutiny, Tumult, Schism, or Disobedience? Is it not sad to consider how implacably Schismatics are set to destroy the peace and order of the Sanctuary? 'Tis true (as we shall have occasion to consider within a little) *the Holy Ghost came upon the Apostles in cloven tongues of fire*, but all fiery Tongues are not from the *Holy Ghost*. A Sect there is of unquiet and restless Spirits, who have no Principles but what tend to destruction; and though it be no part of my design or inclination to rake into that Puddle of little Cavils and Exceptions, that have been boisterously vented against the beauty and order of our National Church, yet I would offer to the consideration of the meanest Hearer these four Particulars; and then let them declare their thoughts of the present Schism, and Wall of Partition, that the *Presbyterians* have rais'd between themselves and the Catholick Church.

I. **CONSIDER**, that they and their Practices are disclaim'd by all Protestant Churches. With what face do they

they alledge that they themselves are the strictest Patrons of the Reformation, who have deserted all other Churches, and by their Principles now think it unlawful to keep the Communion of any settled Church in *Europe*?

2. **ARE** they not Nonconformists to themselves; Their former Confessions of Faith; and their Ringleaders, as well as to the present Church? the windings and turnings of Errour are infinite, it leads them to a thousand absurdities, it hath no solid Basis to rest upon, but the present *crasis* of the Imagination, and as that changes its Figure, the Errour shifts its appearance, and comes forth with further improvements. And yet such is the unlucky fate of all Schismatics, that after all their refinings and Reformations, they still retain some one thing or other that baffles and confounds all their childish and whiffling Objections against the Church. I will instance but in one Particular, which to this day is practised by the *Presbyterians*, and that is, they appoint Adulterers, and such as are most eminently scandalous to wear Sackcloth in their pub-

publick Confessions and Humiliations, to signifie their deep, sincere, and unfeigned remorse and contrition. And is not this a significant Ceremony? and of human appointment too? and in the publick Worship of God. Let them turn the batteries of all their Arguments (by which they endeavour to overthrow all the decent, and universally received usages of the Church) against this their own practice and if after all they conclude their practice to be just and reasonable, they must in the same breath infer, that all their former Arguments against Rites and Ceremonies (impos'd by lawful Ecclesiastical Authority) are all of them Nonsense and Enthusiasm.

3. WHAT was it that might have been said to prove any order of Men schismatick from the first plantations of Christianity, which may not with greater reason be levell'd against them? and what is it that can be pleaded in their Defence, that may not more plausibly be alledged in behalf of the most notorious Schismaticks, that are *known* to be such in the publick Records of the Church? And

4. IF we should quit our ground and leave the Field open to their Pride and Vanity, can they (in that case) upon their own Principles, secure themselves against infinite fractions and subdivisions? But I remember this is not the thing I design to speak to, but to recommend Uniformity as the ligament of that inward Peace and true Order, that Christ design'd should flourish in his Church.

3. HERE I take notice of their Faith and Patience from the first moment that they laid hold on the Promise, until the accomplishment of it. The Hellenist

Jews did not understand by the day of *Pentecost* the very last day, but the whole period of fifty days from the Passover, for the last day of those seven weeks was the day of the Promulgation of the Law, as may be probably gathered from *Exod.*

19. v. 11. And for this very reason was called * *the feast of the Law*. Upon that * day began the New Law to be solemnly published in the most Royal and Magnificent

Vid. Grot. *Agitur enim hic non de una die sed de toto dierum ambitu.*

Vid. Grot. in Loc.

nificent manner. The former Law was proclaim'd by Earthquakes, Fire and Thunderclaps, Smoak and Terrour, that shook the courage of *Moses* himself, as we are told by the Author to the *Hebrews*: But the New Law by a Method more heavenly and mysterious, *the evidence and demonstration of the Spirit*. The Gospel appear'd with Light and Majesty to revive, not to terrifie the World that was sunk in corruption.

ALL this time, I say, from the Passover to *Pentecost*; the Apostles waited for the accomplishment of the Promise, by which we see their Patience and unshaken Constancy. The Miracles that our Saviour had wrought in their presence, and his Resurrection from the dead did arm them against all doubts of his Promise; they rested securely on his Word, and though they felt not as yet the accomplishment of it, yet were they rais'd in their hopes to a certainty beyond all diffidence and Unbelief; if we then but consider the Unity and composure of their Mind, the Beauty, Order, and Uniformity of their Worship and Society; the patience and steadfastness

fastness of their Faith, until the Promise was accomplished, we may easily perceive in what an excellent disposition they were in to receive the *Holy Ghost* in that plentiful measure, and for those ends that it was design'd for. And now we go forward to Consider,

2. THE sensible Emblem of the *Holy Ghost* as it struck upon two of their noblest and most perceptive Senses, their *hearing* and their *seeing*; the one the sense of Faith, the other the sense of Love.

1. I SAY, the sense of Faith in these words, *suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a mighty rushing wind*, and it filled all the House where they were sitting. And this is a very proper Emblem of the *Holy Ghost* when we consider, 1. The strength, force, and activity of it; it came suddenly *as of a mighty rushing wind*. 2. From whence it came, *it came from Heaven*. 3. Where it lighted, it filled that House where *they* were sitting.

*Signum
divini
adventus:
Gen. 3. 8.
at addita
voce statim
[vehe-*

mentis] magnitudo donorum supra Prophetica significatur.
Vid. Grot. in Loc.

I. CON-

Rom. 18.
18.

Pfal. 2. 8.

Psal. 72.
11.

Isa. 2. 2.

I. CONSIDER the strength, swiftness, and loudness of this sound; so loud, that the sound of the Apostolical Preaching *went out into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world*; a Sound that began with the first Ages of the World, in the days of *Noah*, and in time of the succeeding Prophets, until the *Messias* appear'd; but was never so loud, nor so distinct until the Apostles were inspir'd. How unaccountable is it that Twelve poor Men (most of them Fishers) should spread the news of Christianity all the World over in so short a time? That the Worship and Adoration of *one*, ignominiously crucified at *Jerusalem*, should within the compass of a few years run down the Rites and Sacrifices of all Nations? How quickly did God make good his Promise, *I will give thee the Heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession*. It was of one greater than *Solomon* of whom the Psalmist prophesied, *All Kings shall fall down before him, all Nations shall serve him*; and the Prophecy of *Isaiah* runs, that *the Mountain of the Lords house* was to be established on the top of

of the Mountains, and above the Hills. How magnificent is that Prophecy of Malachy, from the rising of the Sun even to the going down of the same, thy Name shall be great among the Gentiles, and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering, for my name shall be great among the heathen. These Promises were effectually fulfilled when the Apostles were endued with Power from on High by the plentiful effusion of the Holy Ghost. The very first day there was an accession of three thousand Souls. Immediately after, many of them which heard the word believed, and the number of the men was about five thousand. And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women, and multitudes out of the Cities round about Jerusalem. And the more they were persecuted, the more was the Gospel propagated. Upon the persecution at Jerusalem, the Gospel spread over the Regions of Judea, Galilee, and Samaria. Thus we find St. James Bishop of Jerusalem speaking to St. Paul. Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe. And the Epistles of St. Peter, St. James, and

Mal. i. ii.

Act. 2. 41.

Act. 4. 4.

Act. 5. 14.

Verse 16.

Act. 21.
20.

St. John, inform us how many Strangers were converted to the Christian Church; how many were brought over by S. Paul alone? and yet all this nothing to the fulness of the *Gentiles* that came afterward; if we look down a little further, how incredible is the number of the

Tertullian. Apolog. cap. 36. *Hesterni sumus & vestra omnia implevimus urbes, insulas, castella, municipia, conciliabula, castra ipsa tribus, decurias, senatum, forum—Potuimus & inermes, nec rebelles sed tantummodo discordes, scilicet divortii invidia adversus vos dimicasse.*

Christians? So quickly the sound of the Gospel did over-run the World, almost the remotest corners of the Earth. *Isaiab* prophecy'd that *the Isles* should wait for his Law. And was not this Promise quickly made good when the Gospel flew

over the Seas, and came to us in Britain scarcely visited by the Sun. The cold *Scythians*, fierce *Germans*, the proud *Romans*, and soft *Grecians* and *Persians*, renounc'd their peculiar Idols, and calmly surrender'd their Necks to His easie Toke according to the Prophecy of *Zachary*, that *the names of the Idols* should be cut off, and were no more to be remembred.

Zachary
13.2.

WE may safely affirm, that no Religion did ever spread its Wings so wide

as

as the Christian, which made the South and the North, East and West meet together in their acknowledgments of the Blessed Jesus. When the Languages of the old World were divided, Mankind was scattered ; but the Gift of Tongues poured upon the Apostles , united all Nations into the most harmonious Society.

*Vid. Grot.
in loc.*

THE Meditation of this ought to enlarge our Souls with generous inclinations towards the recovery of all Mankind, unto the acknowledgment of the Truth. How ought we to pray, that *God would be pleas'd to make his wayes known unto all sorts and conditions of men, and his saving health unto all Nations.* There are no Charities so noble , nor so well plac'd, as when we *convert a sinner from the error of his way.* The Gospel is a sovereign remedy to remove the blindness and stupidity of the whole World, if we were zealous enough to promote it ; how shameful is it for such as have large Dominions and great Power upon Earth, that they are nor more busied in contriving Methods , how the sound of the Gospel may reach the utmost ends

of the Earth? How few of them that are born without the inclosure of the Church come over to our Religion now a days? And this is not to be imputed to our Religion it self, but to our coldness and indifferency about it; and that we do not live up to the height and purity of its Rules; the mighty success that it had in the Primitive Ages, in defiance of all malice and opposition, sufficiently proves that it came from Heaven. And this leads me to the consideration of the next word that follows.

2. *IT came from heaven.* We are told by the *Psalmist*, that *God bringeth the wind out of his treasures*; but this wind that came from heaven, hath a nearer claim to Gods peculiar Treasury, than those Winds that are stor'd up in the dark Caverns of the Earth. This was the breath of God, it did not blow from the Earth, nor from Humane Councils, nor from the highest Regions of the Air, but from Heaven it self, from the Throne of the Most High. A Wind it was that blew with Majesty, rather than Fury; Strength rather than Boisterousness; they felt some heavenly Charm in the

the noise that filled the room; it rais'd their attention and their ears to something high and extraordinary; and the surprize of its swiftness could not hinder a secret joy, a mighty elevation of Spirit which cannot be named, and which strongly convinc'd the Apostles, that *this wind came from heaven*; and that it was *the mighty voice of God*. And this may appear, if we consider

1. **THE** things that they utter'd when they were filled with it. A heavenly Doctrine, full of Light and Majesty; a Doctrine that not only assured us of Immortality, but taught us also the infallible Methods to arrive at it; a Doctrine, that filled our ears with new, sublime, unheard of Mysteries; *God manifested in the Flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of Angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the World, received up into Glory*. How far were these great Truths beyond the Speculations of Plato, and the little Metaphysical Subtilties of the Peripateticks?

2. **THIS** may appear, if we consider the Change and Affections that this Doctrine

Cc 3 wrought

wrought in its Profelytes; this *wind* did not blow them up into airy and fantastick apprehensions, into proud and supercilious thoughts; it taught no arts of gathering treasures, nor of making themselves great in the World, but it lifted their Souls above it, to the place whence it came; and it taught them to trample upon its glories, to despise its fears, and overlook all its splendor, and to *set their affections upon the things that are above*, where *Jesus* is inthroned in the highest Power and Majesty. Now 'tis evident, that no such change could be wrought by Natural Causes: for men acted by Natural Principles can go no higher than such Maxims can carry them; but to love God, *to crucifie the flesh, with the affections and lusts thereof*, to forgive injuries, to despise the World, & all the things that our appetites formerly did headlong run into, must proceed from some Supernatural and Divine force; it carries us above our *own* level, and makes us to feel, that *He that is in us, is greater than he that is in the world*. This Argument is frequently insisted on by the first Apologists for our Religion.

3. IT appears to have been from Heaven in its Method and Operation, and *immediate* Effects upon the Apostles, which exceeded all Art and Nature, that men illiterate and without education, (most of them come to a considerable Age) that they should speak the Languages of all Nations, who a little before understood but one Language, and that the rudest Dialect of their own Nation. This wonderful matter must needs be referr'd to some supernatural Cause.

3. LET us take notice where this sound was heard; and the Text saith, that it filled the house where they were. The Inspirations of the Holy Ghost are not casual and fortuitous, but ordered by Infinite Counsel and Wisdom. This is the *wind* that *bloweth where it listeth* John 3. 8. in the strictest sense; it filled that house, it blew by discretion and election upon the house where the Apostles resided; to let us (it may be) understand, that the *Holy Ghost*, to the end of the World, is to be received in the fellowship of the Apostles and their Successors; it is the

precious Ointment first poured upon their heads ; and from them to the skirts of the Church in all Ages. There are many Spirits gone forth into the World with a boisterous noise, and they pretend their descent from Heaven ; but if they have forsaken the fellowship of the Apostles , and broken the ligaments of peace and order, by which the Catholick Church , as a Spiritual Society is knit together ; if they run cross to the Spirit of Unity , by which we are oblig'd to believe the Communion of Saints, in that case we are quickly undeceiv'd , they are certainly from below ; they are not directed by the Wisdom that is from above ; nor have they their rise from Heaven, but from the Earth, and are blown up by some subterraneous Vapours, that end in nothing but in a little vain glory , faction and popular applause.

THE *Holy Ghost* in its most plentiful Effusions came down upon the Apostles according to the nature of their high and difficult employment , and the circumstances of the Church at that time, and it was to fall in lesser drops to the
end

end of the World upon all that are sent by God for the services of the Altar, who have their Mission from the Apostles by regular conveyance and succession.

2. FROM what was heard, let us go forward to what was seen, and *there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and sat upon each of them.* 1. There appeared Tongues. The Apostles that were formerly silent, had now their tongues loos'd, they lifted up their voice like Trumpets, and spake the wonderful things of God, and the *Jewish* Proselytes from all Nations that were now at *Jerusalem* were astonish'd to hear the poor *Galileans* open up the profoundest Mysteries so readily and so successfully; their Tongues as if they were cloven by the finger of God spake those words that were like sparks of fire in the Souls of men: now they appear'd to be the genuine Disciples of *him who spake as never man spake; who taught as one having authority; whose words did reach the Souls of men with life and force, and pierc'd between the Soul and the Spirit; between the joynts and the marrow.* It was then true of the Apostles, what was prophetically

*Vid. Bish.
Andr. Ser.
in loc.*

Mattth.

tically said by the *Psalmist* of our Saviour, *Grace is poured into thy lips, therefore God hath blessed thee for ever.* The streams of their heavenly eloquence ran smoothly and fluently, in Mysteries, in Revelations, in Reproofs, in Directions, in Counsels, in Wisdom, in Knowledge, in Purity; not exactly limned and proportion'd by elaborate periods and artificial dresses, but in the greatest plainness, mixt with the greatest power, they deliver'd their message; how boldly and how pertinently did they confute the slanders of Infidelity? With what courage did they upbraid the *Sanhedrim*, with the Murder of the Lord of Life? Who among their Scribes, and their learnedest Pharisees durst encounter the Wisdom of *S. Stephen*, when once filled with the *Holy Ghost*? How flat are Humane Reasonings against the Wisdom of God? How feeble, and how dull are all contrivances against the Council of the Almighty? And now the Apostles found the Prophecy concerning the *Messias* in a great measure verified in his Disciples,

Isa. 50. 4. The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the Learned, that I should know to speak a word in season to him that is weary.

2. THOSE Tongues were cloven. There are some Tongues cloven by the Devil, that can nimbly shuffle themselves into different figures, and are so accurately vers'd in the little arts of dissimulation, that you may come much sooner to their meaning, when you understand every thing that they say in a contradictory sense; than when you swallow it down in the literal meaning. S. James telleth us, that *with the same* Jam. 3. 9. *tongue we both bless God, and curse man;* but the Tongues of the Apostles were cloven for a more noble end, viz. that they might divide aright the Word of God unto all Nations under Heaven, *Parthians, Medes, and Elamites, and the* Acts 2. *dwellers in Mesopotamia, in Judea, in Capadocia, Pontus, Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, strangers of Rome, Jews, and Proselytes, Cretes, and Arabians, all of them heard the Apostles in their own language speak the wonderful things of God.* The Church was no longer to be confin'd to the Land of Judea, but from the rising of the Sun, to the going down thereof, the Worship of the Living and true God was to be set up in all Nations

John 4.

tions without distinction of Jew and Gentile. So our Saviour tells the Woman of Samaria, that *the hour was come*, when the Worship of the true God was neither confin'd to Jerusalem, nor the Mountains of Samaria, but that *he should be worshipped in Spirit and in Truth.*

3. THOSE Tongues appear'd in the similitude of Fire; the Tongues of the Apostles were fired from Heaven; and this is evident, whether we consider, 1. The Heat of their Zeal; or, 2. The Light of their Doctrine; or, 3. The Force, Activity and Success of their Ministry.

Mid. Philon. ad Decal. apud Greg. Mat. 3. 2. & in loc.

I. I SAY, View the Heat of their Zeal; what a flame was kindled by it in the hearts of other men? How did they crowd into the Church, when there was nothing to be gain'd by it but Death, Disgrace and Martyrdom? What a change was wrought upon the Spirits of men by the Light of the Gospel? How earnestly and how vigorously did they serve God, when they first came over from Paganism and Superstition? How joyfully did they take the spoiling of

The Eleventh Sermon.

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of their goods? And with what courage Heb. 11. did they offer themselves before all Judges, Courts and Tribunals, to be sacrificed for the Name of *Jesus*?

2. Next to this, let us consider the Light that is in it: now the World was convinc'd, that the *Messias* was the Light of the *Gentiles* in the highest sense; that John. He was *the light come down from heaven*, Luke. and the day-star from on high that visited us. How swiftly did Error, Darkness and Superstition flee before him? When the Enemy of Mankind did bend all his forces to retard and obscure his Victories, the Light of the glorious Gospel of Christ broke through those Clouds and appeared in its Meridian Splendor, maugre all opposition: Psal. 104. *When the Sun ariseth, then man goeth forth unto his labour*, and the Beasts retire into their Dens; but when the *Sun of Righteousness* thus appear'd, the *Demons* that formerly enslav'd Mankind, were forced to retire. Their Idolatrous Rites and Ceremonies were deserted, and made to leave the field to the triumphant Standard of our Blessed Saviour. This Light look'd men so broad in the face, that they

Acts 26.
18.

they were asham'd of their former folly and wickedness; they surrend'ered themselves captives to its clear discoveries and illuminations: for its evidence was so strong and undeniable. *S. Paul* telleth us, that it was the main scope of their Commission and Design, *to open mens eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them that are sanctified.*

3. FIRE did resemble the *Holy Ghost*, because of its Force and Activity; and when we consider the success of their Ministry, we must acknowledge, that the Power of God was engag'd to second their Commission. Who can, without the deepest astonishment, and Adorations of Gods infinite Wisdom, think of the Achievements of those poor men? When we remember what it was that our *Saviour* commanded, and by what means they were to put his Commands into execution, and what opposition they ought in all reason to look for, if they attempted any such thing, what was it then that he did command them?

No

No less than to go and teach all Nations ; i. e. to renverse the establish'd Laws, Sacrifices and Customs of the whole World ; to destroy the Worship of all false Gods, to introduce the Mystical *Judaism* in the room of the Literal, of which the *Jews* were so obstinately fond ; to reform the manners of all Mankind ; to teach them to live by new Principles, and in hopes of distant and unseen rewards ; to mortifie and subdue inveterate prejudices, and their strongest inclinations ; to run up the Hill against the force of Custom, Law and Example. In a word, to make the most incredible Changes in the World by such men as were most unlikely to bring them to pass ; Must rude and illiterate Mechanics grapple with the Rabbies and Philosophers of East and West ? By what Armies, by what deep Contrivances must this Design be set on foot ? How ridiculous is the very thought of it to a man that stands no higher, than on the level of Humane Maxims ? Yet this Divine Fire in their Tongues burnt up and consum'd the Worship of the Devil, and silenc'd his most famous Oracles ; and brought the whole World, in a manner, under

1 Cor. I.
25.

under new Laws; and as a rapid and violent flame devours combustible matter without mercy, without resistance; so the Christian Religion pulled down the Rites, Customs and Solemnities of Superstition, even then when the Learning, Zeal and Power of all Mankind were engag'd to support it. *S. Paul* tells us, that *the foolishness of God is wiser than men*; *i. e.* the most unlikely means, seconded by his assistance, produce the most wonderful and astonishing effects; the methods that seem contemptible to humane eyes overcome the wisest and the most subtle contrivances; the meanest and weakest arrow in his quiver, the clownish Fishers of *Gallilee*, will baffle and confound all the Sons of Wit and Speculation; the most accurate amongst them (who had been train'd from their infancy in the Arts of Sophistry and Eloquence) stood mute and stupid before those new Philosophers, who came to discover unto us life and immortality. The Topicks and the Methods of the *Athenian* Schools were swept down like thin Cobwebs, when this true Light appear'd; their curious Schemes were all rejected, and a higher Doctrine than any that

that was formerly taught, was establish'd upon no lower Principles, than *the evidence and demonstration of the Spirit*; the little knacks of the Philosophers that consisted most in the shufflings and turnings of Words and Phrases, vanish'd like airy Phantoms, when Truth it self in its Meridian Splendor inspir'd those frail men, can we attribute this their Victory to any thing short of God himself? *His word is like a fire, and as a hammer that breaketh the rocks in pieces.* So the Apostles forc'd their way through Rocks, and pierc'd to the Center of mens Souls, and gain'd to the obedience of Christ those hearts, that one would think were altogether inaccessible; they pulled down *strong holds and lofty imaginations*, and by their swift and universal success, at such a Time, and against such Mountains of Opposition, they gave the World to understand, that their Mission was from above. And here are the Trophies and Triumphs of Christianity, the wonderful Propagation of our Religion made it evident, that this Fire that came down upon the Apostles in *Cloven Tongues*, was not a flitting and vagrant Meteor, unfixt and moveable, but a solid and durable

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Light,

Light, which was to continue in the Church until the consummation of all things.

3. HERE we may consider the accomplishment of the Promise contain'd in the fourth Verse. *They were all filled with the Holy Ghost.* That the Apostles were inspir'd by God, is beyond all contradiction; and they who impute their Progress in the Conversion of Nations, their Languages and Miracles, their divine Reasonings and Revelations to any ordinary Cause, subvert the Principles upon which our Religion stands. All Civiliz'd Nations ancient and modern do acknowledge the possibility of a Divine Revelation; nay, that it is reasonable for Mankind to expect it in some extraordinary Cases, and most people plead it in favours of some one Custom or other received amongst themselves; and if all men agree in this, that it is reasonable to look for it, and that by the strength of Reason, we may distinguish a true *Revelation* from what is counterfeit: What should harden men against the Christian Religion, for the miraculous Inspiration which the Church commemorates this Day,

Day, hath stamp't upon it all the Characters of Divinity that our Souls can think of, even when they examine things most calmly and accurately.

LET us therefore thank Almighty God, that he gave us the highest assurances of our Religion; that he made our hope so fixt, that it cannot be battered; for when we read that the *Holy Ghost* came down upon the Apostles in this manner, we may conclude infallibly, that our Lord is not only risen from the dead, but invested also with the highest Power at the right hand of God the Father. The Gifts and magnificent Donatives that he scattered amongst his Subjects when he enter'd into the Heavens, sufficiently convince us, that *all power* Matth.
in heaven and in earth is given unto him.
To his Ascension may be applied that of the *Psalmist*, *Thou hast ascended up on high,* Psal. 68.
thou hast led captivity captive, thou hast 18.
received gifts for men, yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them. Let us say then as the *Psalmist* invites, *I will bless the Lord* Psal. 34.
at all times, his praise shall continually be in my mouth: O magnifie the Lord with
Dd 2 me;

v. 3.

me, and let us exalt his Name together. This Effusion of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles, is so full a proof of his Victory, that now we lean on his Promise with the greatest tranquillity and assurance: *He hath ridden prosperously, because of truth, and meekness, and righteousness; his right hand hath taught him terrible things; the enemies of his Kingdom fall before him; he hath broken them as with a rod of iron; he hath dashed them in pieces, like a potters vessel; he is established for ever King in Zion.* The meditation of this fills our hearts with joy and gladness, that our Redeemer, who is *bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh*, hath trodden all our enemies under his feet. *We have this hope as an anchor of the Soul both sure and steadfast, and which entreth unto that within the Veil, whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus made an High Priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedeck.*

Psal. 45.

Heb. 6. 19.

NOR are we to think that because now he is encircled with Glory and Majesty, that he can be unmindful of us no more than he was when he was compass'd

pass'd with our Infirmities, and as he made good his Promise to the Apostles, and sent upon them the *Holy Ghost* to plead his cause against Infidelity, so we may rely on his Word that *he will raise us again unto life and immortality*, tho' our dust should mingle with all the scattered Atoms of the Creation, *he will* Phil. 3 21. *change our vile bodies that they may be fashion'd like unto his glorious body according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.* And the same Apostle assures us, that, *if the spirit of him that raised up Jesus* Rom. 8. *from the dead dwell in us, he that raised* 11. *up Christ from the dead shall also quicken our mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in us.* Thus from the fulfilling of what is past, we may reason our selves into the belief and certainty of what is to come.

AND let us thank our heavenly Father that so early strengthen'd the hands of the Apostles against Infidelity and Atheism by such plentiful effusions of the *Holy Ghost*, the *Cataracts* of Heaven seem'd to be opened, and the Apostles were made to speak with irresistible

Wisdom; and the same Spirit is given unto the Church (in proportionable measures as her necessities require) to the end of the World, especially to the immediate Servants of the Sanctuary, if they do not wickedly shut their Eyes against its light and beauty. The *garments* of the Church are of *Needlework variegated* with the manifold Excellencies of the Spirit; the interchangeable appearances of those gifts that in different Figures make up the *decorum* of the whole, were not so entirely confin'd to the Primitive Ages, but that his more immediate Servants are furnished in all periods of the Church according to the nature and difficulty of their undertaking. He doth not give all gifts to every one, but parcels them out with that heavenly discretion, that no man may say to his Brother, *I have no need of thee*, therefore the Spirit of Love scattereth his Donatives so as at once to supply our Necessities and advance our Charity, that all of us might hang upon one another in the closest Relations and dependencies; the mystical Body of the Church being knit together by Joints, and Bands as is the Natural.

1 Cor. 12.
4, 5, 6, 7, 8,
9, 10, 11,
12.

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NOW when we add unto the former considerations, that the gifts of the Spirit did not only seal our Religion by all possible external evidence in the Apostolical Ages, but that now the very same Spirit, by its sanctifying power and Vertues unites us to Christ. What reason have we to rejoice in God our Saviour? It is the Spirit that breaks our bonds and fetters, and *makes us run the Race that is set before us with joy and alacrity*; it is by *this*, that we *crucify the flesh with the affections and lusts* thereof; by *this* we become the Temples of the living God, resolute against Temptations, humble, chaste, sober, heavenly minded: in a word, it is the *earnest of our inheritance the Spirit by which we cry, Abba, Father*; the Spirit that *helpeth our infirmities, and makes us more than Conquerors through Jesus Christ that loved us*. Can there be any more ample matter of Praise? What is it can loose our Tongues unto the most joyful acknowledgments, if this does not? Let us say with the Psalmist, (when we view the Psal. 145. whole Oeconomy of our Redemption) I will extol thee my God, O King, and

Heb. 2.
3, 4.

I will bless thy Name for ever and ever.
And let us conclude that *we cannot escape*
if we neglect so great a salvation, which at
the first began to be spoken by the Lord,
and was confirmed unto others by them
that heard him, God also bearing them
witness both with Signs and Wonders,
and with divers Miracles, and Gifts of
the Holy Ghost according to his own
Will.

*To God the Father, Son and
Holy Ghost, be Glory,
Dominion and Power, for
ever and ever. Amen.*

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S E R M O N
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P S A L M XXVI. V. 6.

*I will wash mine hands in innocence;
so will I compass thine Altar,
O Lord.*

THIS Psalm is *David's Appeal* to the Omniscience of God as to his own Innocence and Integrity, and it seems tacitly to refer to the Calumnies and Slanders propagated against him during the Reign of *Saul*; and therefore he puts his trust in the strength of the Almighty, that he

he should never be shaken by the fury and malice of his Enemies.

THE Verse that I have read is but a part of that Appeal; and though our English Version reads it in the *future*, yet the scope of the Context, the Analogy and coherence of the whole allow the reading of it in the * *preterit*, as may appear easily to the attentive Reader, but whether the one or the other is not so much my business to enquire. This is certain that the custom of Washing before Sacrifices, both amongst the *Jews* and the *Gentiles* had this Moral in its bottom, that all our approaches to the Divine Majesty (especially our most solemn and extraordinary) ought to be performed with the most accurate Preparation, purity of Mind, and recollection of Spirit; therefore the Psalmist, as a part of his Appeal made use of this Argument in his Defence, that he walked in his Integrity constantly, and when he brought his Sacrifices to the Altar, he viewed his Soul with the most accurate search and enquiry, to see if there was any thing that might indispose him to come so near the divine Presence.

THESE

* Vid. Dr.
Hamm.
in loc.

THESE words have in them no remarkable difficulty ; they are a plain allusion to that known Custom of Washing before Sacrificing, both amongst the *Jews* and the *Gentiles*. All the *Eastern* Nations were very frequent in their Washings, especially before they approached their most solemn and sacred Mysteries ; and therefore I may the more safely apply this Text to the highest Mystery amongst the Christians, which is the *Sacrament of the Lords Supper*, which now requires in a peculiar manner our Attention and Meditation.

IT is in it self by the confession of all Christians, the highest Mystery of our Religion, nay all the Mysteries of it gathered together in one ; and therefore all the Graces of the Spirit ought to adorn our Souls when we come so near unto God ; they meet together at this Solemnity all of them in their highest flight and Exaltation.

I shall confine my Discourse at present to two Particulars.

I. OUR

1. OUR Duty and Obligation of coming to the Sacrament of the Lords Supper.

2. I will direct the manner of our coming, and how we must attempt it.

1. LET us consider our Obligations to attend this Solemn and Magnificent Entertainment; and there is nothing more clear if we consider the Authority of him who enjoins it. God upbraided his People of old, that the *Nazarites* were more careful and observant of the original Rules and directions of their founder, than his People were of his Laws who was the Creator of Heaven and Earth. All the Sects of Philosophers up and down the World, thought it their honour and their interest to propagate the Opinions of the first of their Order.

AND will our dearest Lord and Master give us a Command of the highest consequence, and dare we refuse to obey it? This is an indignity to his Authority, an immediate affront to his Sovereignty and Power. How highly would

would an earthly Prince resent an injury of this nature? Here is a Feast prepared noble and plentiful, and design'd to express the highest kindness and respect. Prov. 9. v. 2. 3. 4. 5. Matth. 22. Luke 14. This Metaphor is used by *Solomon*, and by a greater than *Solomon*, mystically to set off the ingratitude of such as refuse, (and trample upon) the inestimable offers of his Love and Favour.

WHEN we remember who invites us to this Feast, the *Author and finisher of our Faith*, whose dominion is from everlasting to everlasting, who came from the bosom of the Father to rescue us from the bottomless Abyss of our miseries; is it not the highest impudence, the rudest affront to the Majesty of Heaven, the most daring violation of his Laws, to slight his Invitation? When we add to this the consideration of those things that are provided for us in this Feast, we may easily see the folly of slighting it; the pardon of our Sins is sealed, the peace and tranquillity of our Consciences are confirmed, our spiritual strength and fortitude are recruited, and we are enabled to grapple with all our Enemies more successfully; we are strengthened

thenced beyond our frailties to run the Race that is set before us.

ARE not we by our baptismal Vows already listed under his Standard? Are not we confederated with him when we are received into the Christian Church? How inconsistent is it with our spiritual Allegiance to reject the offers of his Love, and trample under foot his most solemn Commands? This is treachery and perfidiousness in the highest degree.

2. CONSIDER the circumstances of his Love wherewith this Institution was appointed. He lived with his Disciples for a considerable time in the full exercise of Patience, Meekness, and Humility. He gave them an Example that they should follow his steps; He train'd them up by his Sermons and by his Miracles in the discipline and knowledge of his Kingdom and Scepter; He frequently (to their own conviction) baffled the contradictions of the Jews, and endeavour'd to remove their prejudices by all the Methods that the highest Wisdom and Goodness thought proper for their cure. He proved himself to be the

the true *Messias* by many infallible Signs, and now at last when he had run out the course of his publick Ministry, and solemnized the last Passover, and was ready to offer himself a publick Propitiatory Sacrifice for the sins of the World ; he appointed this Sacrament as the highest, the last, and the most solemn Seal and Pledge of his Love to the Church, the Abstract and Memorial of all that he did upon Earth, and of all that he taught, and of all that he promised in the World to come, the conveyance of those great and rich Blessings that are procured by his Death and Passion ; when we remember, I say, such a confluence of endearing circumstances, how can we refuse our presence and obedience ? How strong are the Charms of his Love ? What height of Courage, what degrees of Constancy were necessary to support him against the shock of so many Affronts and Indignities ? Who can read the History of his Passion, and not see the inconceivable condescensions of God ? Who can view the progress of that Tragedy and not be astonished ; when we consider the incomprehensible Love of God, that he

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who was God took upon him the form of a servant, with no other design than to accomplish the work of our Redemption, and that he drew the Map of his life and sufferings in this ravishing Ordinance, that the Church might remember the glorious Adventures of his Love by this Eucharistical Sacrifice, how monstrous is the ingratitude if we seem to neglect it.

*IN that Night wherein he was betrayed, how Emphatick and how full of Love are these words, the fury of his Enemies, the rage and malice of the Jews, the treachery of one of his Disciples, the faintness and weakness of all of them, could not so divert his thoughts, but that our greatest concerns were next his very heart; and lest we should forget such glorious things, he abridged the History of all the Gospel in this one plain Rite and Institution. His Life and Doctrine, and all the proofs of our Religion he sums up in one easie Ceremony; so that this Sacrament is the *Compend* of all Religion, the very Holy of Holies, and the top of all Christian joy and comfort; if we consider
such*

such circumstances so engaging, in the first Institution of this Sacrament, we cannot refuse our attendance if we break not through all the bonds of Piety and Humanity, and reverse all the Laws of gratitude and good nature.

3. WE may easily discern our Obligation to it from the practice of the first Christians, and the value put upon it by the whole Church. The Apostles and their Successors for the first three hundred years were very frequent in the celebration of this Sacrament, it was a part of their daily Worship, when the devotion of the Christian Church was vigorous and fervent; they could not live without the daily commemoration of the Love of Jesus. This Sacrament was the most substantial and highest Cordial that he left for the support of the Church until his second coming again; therefore the Christians of all Ages looked upon it with so much veneration and regard, that as they judged themselves obliged to come unto it, so they approached it with the strictest preparations, with all the solemnities and care of Fasting, Prayer and Humility. The

universal deluge of Atheism and prophanity that overflows the whole Island in which we live is much to be imputed to the contempt and neglect of this Sacrament.

4. WE are obliged to this Attendance, because it is the peculiar Character of Christianity, the badge of our Religion, and the livery of the *Crucified Jesus*. The Rites of all Religions had something in them to distinguish both the Deity that was worshipped, and the Votary from all others ; The whole System of the Levitical Oeconomy was but a distinction of the *Jews* from all other Nations, and all the Rites of that ancient Law were either opposite to the *Zabian* Customs, or directly tended to preserve them from Idolatry. The *Pagan* Sacrifices every where had some one significant Ceremony or other by which they were distinguish'd from the Worship of other Idols, and the Christians by this *Mystery* are separated from the rest of Mankind who are without the *household of Faith*. This Ordinance in the Church is the most solemn of all our Mysteries, or rather the consecratina-

catenation of all of them together, it hath no foundation in, nor directions from the light of Nature; and therefore it derives its dignity and obligation from the pure Institution of our Lord and Saviour. Hence it is that when Men are guilty of sins against the Moral Law, their Consciences do accuse them, and the remembrance of their folly proves uneasie to them; but they live in the wilful neglect of this Sacrament for many years, and yet they are as quiet and undisturbed in their omissions as if they were the most innocent; the reason is, because natural Conscience prompts not to it, it hath its *original* immediately from our Saviour's Authority, and this consideration alone makes us inexcusable if we neglect it, because by it we are distinguished from the rest of mankind; it is so peculiar to our Religion, that we seem to renounce it, unless we shew the highest zeal for it and affection to it. *Do it* (said he) *in remembrance of me.* There is no Order of Men have any such Institution; it is our *Characteristick*; that wherein we triumph; that wherewith we are reproach'd by the *Pagans*: that whereby we express our love to our Blessed Saviour, and avow our selves to be his Disciples in the face

of all danger and disgrace. This very consideration should move us the rather, since by it we express the purest love and affection to his immediate Worship and Obedience; therefore St. Paul tells us, that *by this we shew forth the Lords death till he come, i. e.* we openly display it, we are not at all ashamed of it, we flee unto it in our greatest difficulties, and at the hour of death as to our safest Sanctuary and Refuge. This is the strong Tower that defends us from the wrath of God, the accusations of Devils, and the remorse of our own Consciences. We are in this Sacrament to *shew forth the Lords death,* 1. To God, as our Atonement. 2. To Men, as our Profession. 3. To Devils, as our strongest Refuge and Defiance.

Heb. 4.
15, 16.

1. WE shew it forth unto God as our Atonement. We come unto God the Father under the covert of his Mediation, *Having therefore such a high Priest, we may come boldly unto the Throne of Grace; a high Priest, who is holy, harmless, and undefiled to whom all power in Heaven and in Earth is given,* who is now returned from the Grave victorious, and by his Blood makes Intercession

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sion for us in the Holy of Holies; *he lives for ever at the right hand of God*; it is by this Blood and Sacrifice that we plead successfully for mercy and compassion. This is the argument that God himself cannot resist (if urg'd by Faith and Charity.) Our Saviour is the great favourite of Heaven, and interposes in in all our necessities, we lean on the Merit of his Sacrifice as on the surest Pillar of our hope and confidence; and therefore we come unto God by him as by our Surety and our Advocate, and *if he gave us his Son, how shall he not with him also give us all things we need.*

2. WE shew it forth unto Men; we openly proclaim that we will not desert his Standard, that we are not ashamed of Christ crucified; that we are Disciples of the Cross in the strictest sense; *Matth, 5. 16.* that we glory in it as our most honourable Character; that we are resolved to *Let our light so shine before men, that they may see our good works, and glorify our Father which is in heaven*; and not to deny him before Men either in our profession or in our practices; for *he that nameth the name of Jesus must depart from all iniquity.*

E c 3

3. WE

Rom. 8.
34, 35.

3. WE shew forth his Death and Sacrifice in open defiance of all the Powers of Hell, *Who is he that condemneth ? it is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.* By the Death of Jesus our mouths are opened unto Songs of Triumph and Defiance, and filled with joy and gladness; the Devils may tremble unto fear and despair when they see us listed under the Standard of so great a Captain, so famous a Warriour, so stedfast, and resolute a Friend, *who for us and for our Salvation came down from Heaven.* All their objections are silenced, we have our feet upon a Rock, and all the Armies of darkness cannot reach us; the Legions of Hell may cloath themselves in their most terrible appearances, and tell over all the sad stories of our miscarriages, and aggravate them to the highest, and declare how often we have sinned, and in what instances we have provoked the Majesty of God, against what Light, what Reproofs, what Illuminations, and what checks of Conscience we have repelled, how long we have

have neglected our repentance, and how much we have abused his Patience; against all these formidable accusations, the Christian hath one solid answer, and that is, the *Death of Jesus* and his triumphant *Resurrection from the dead*.

5. OUR Obligation doth appear from the efficacy and excellency of this very Sacrament. It is the great Antidote against the frailties of our Nature, the frequent assaults of Temptation, and the wiles and stratagems of the Devil. There is nothing discourages our Adversaries more than when we resolutely prepare our selves to receive the Holy Sacrament of the Lords Supper. It is the most sovereign Remedy against our most habitual Vices, our most inveterate Prejudices, our most stubborn evil Habits. It is the most significant and sensible representation of the Death and Passion of our Lord and Saviour; and therefore all the Graces of the Spirit do meet in their vigour and exaltation at this Sacrament. This made some of the Ancients admit such as had fallen in the time of Persecution sooner to the peace and Communion of the Church,

Cyp.

than their ordinary discipline did allow, because there was a Persecution shortly to follow; therefore it was not thought fit to leave so many destitute of so strong a Cordial in time of danger, but were the rather admitted to this highest act of Communion, that they might be strengthened against the next Encounter of the Enemy. When we remember how soon our highest zeal grows remiss, our Devotion cold and flat, our Purposes wavering, our evil Habits grow strong, and our Enemy gains ground of us, and the Spirit of God begins to withdraw from us, and we cannot tell how soon we may be judicially hardened against the most effectual Remedies of the Gospel: How great need have we then of such a strong Remedy against our faintness and weariness, to settle and confirm our resolutions? to blow up our zeal into a bright and unquenchable flame? to make us *one* with Christ? to make us live no more the life of Nature, but *the life of the Faith of the Son of God.*

6. OUR Obligation to frequent this Sacrament doth appear from the nature of
of

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of the Mystery it self : for it resembles in its spiritual tendencies and design the Feast upon the remainders of the Sacrifice, by which Feast the Votaries did solemnly resign themselves to the service and worship of that Deity, of whose Sacrifices they did eat. It is upon this ground that the Apostle proves the unlawfulness of Christians going to the Idol-feasts upon the invitation of their *Pagan Friends* : for by just interpretation such as frequented the Idol-feasts were by the solemnities of their Worship oblig'd to adhere to the service of that Idol, since they were *partakers of the Altar of Idols*, they had the most solemn fellowship with Devils ; and therefore the Apostle concludes, that they could not be *partakers of the Lords table and of the table of Devils*. When we come to this Sacrament we are in the strictest league and union with Jesus Christ, and consequently we proclaim to the World that we are entirely his, that we not only renounce all idolatrous Worship, but that we adhere to his service and obedience with greater zeal and fidelity.

Vid. Dr.
Cud-
worth.

1 Cor. 10.
16, &c.

7. AND

7. And lastly, OUR Obligations do appear from the vanity and impertinence of those Excuses that are ordinarily pretended to divert Men from this Ordinance. And

1. LET us consider their Excuses from their business and incumbrances, as
 Matth. 22. if their worldly Affairs might engross
 4, 5, 6. their whole time. This is to contemn
 Luke 14. and despise all the glad Tidings of the
 18, 19, 20. Gospel, to prefer their meanest things to their greatest Concerns, to dissemble with the Almighty, who knows that our time is not so narrow, but that we have leisure to look after our Souls. But what do we gain by such foolish and treacherous Excuses? Can we hide the darkest retirements of our Soul from the Omniscience of Heaven? Or is there any thing so directly opposite to the nature of God, as this perfidious Hypocrisy? It is true, *We cannot serve God and Mammon both together*, yet we may look after our worldly Business in subordination to our Souls; but if we must so serve our Mammon as to neglect the Solemnities of Religion, we then

then plainly make it our God, and renounce the hopes of Christianity. I do not deny but that at some time or other a Man may be so entangled, that he cannot without extraordinary inconvenience give his attendance at the Lords Table : but when his business is made his ordinary excuse, we may reasonably presume that he loves this World more than God, and the promises of another life, and consequently that this World is the Idol which he worships with the strength and activity of his Soul. Our Saviour lays down this Maxim, that *where our hearts are, there our treasure is also.* Whatever the Object is that devours most of our time, and takes up our strongest thoughts, desires and endeavours, that of necessity must be our God, since we bestow upon it the highest adoration, love and esteem. Let us not then so often excuse our absence by our wordly Affairs, lest we should come at length to say that there are no portions of our time due to God, nor to the thoughts of another life. But when we invite you to the holy Sacrament, we do not persuade you to abandon your business for ever, that may again

again return in its season, and with the greater success too, when you *acknowledg* God in all your ways, and are sensible that his Providence interposes in the meanest accidents of our life: Nay this pretended excuse from the variety of our incumbrances is against the common sense of Mankind; for all Nations have allowed large portions of their time for their publick Devotion, and they reckoned that the more religious they were, by so much the more they prospered.

2. SOME excuse themselves by the multitude of their Scruples, and that they cannot compose their Consciences after their most serious endeavours. In that case they are obliged to go to their spiritual Guides, who are sent by God to inform their Consciences to confirm their Faith, to clear and explain the nature of this Mystery, and to direct them in all the steps of their approach towards it; we cannot then be excused by our Scruples when they might be removed in the regular Method of Gods appointment.

3. SOME

3. **SOME** are discouraged upon the sight of their sins to approach so great a Mystery. And without all doubt unless they are sincere and peremptory in their penitential resolutions, they ought not to thrust themselves so near the presence of the Almighty ; but such as are humbled at the sight of their sins, and can appeal unto God that they desire now at last to be freed from their burden, this Sacrament in its nature and tendency is designed for them, for penitent and broken-hearted Sinners, for *he came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance*. The danger of receiving unworthily is very great, but the danger of contemning and vilifying a plain Institution of our Saviours, perhaps, is of an equal if not of more terrible consequence. For they do nothing less than *provoke the Lord to jealousy*, i. e. they set up other Gods to worship, and trample upon his most sacred and plainest Institutions.

4. **THEY** excuse themselves from their hopes of after amendment and greater preparations ; but this is the
most

most pernicious subterfuge that can be invented. Our time runs away, our spiritual strength is decayed, our Hearts are more and more hardened against the Gospel; and is it safe for us under so many disadvantages to delay our Cure one moment longer? *Now while it is*

Pſalm 95. called to day barden not your hearts as in the provocation; and do not fright your ſelves from your Duty by ſuch idle and impertinent Excuses; that becauſe your preparation is neceſſary, your abſence is excuſable. Such reasonings are intolerable, we ought to conclude rather, that becauſe our preſence is indiſpenſible, therefore our preparation ought to be the more accurate and ſeaſonable. When we conſider the whole Affair more maturely, we may eaſily ſee that they who make light of the holy Sacrament ſeem to renounce their Baptiſm; ſince the Vows of Baptiſm are again reinforced and made ſtronger, and if we do not diſown them, why do not we gladly renew them?

IN the ſecond place, I promiſed to direct your approaches to the Holy Table. All which may be ſumm'd up
in

in the words of St. Paul to the *Corinthians*, *Let a man examine himself and so let him eat of this bread; for he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself.* Which last words the Apostle added not to keep us back from the Communion, but to make us more impartial, strict, and accurate in our trial and preparation. It is gross stupidity and ignorance to think that by shunning the Sacrament of the Lords Supper we may escape damnation; for the very sins in which we continue unreform'd, and which indispose us for the Eucharist, are the true causes of Damnation; there is no help then but to be rid of our sins by the most ingenuous remorse and Contrition, *to search and try our ways, and to turn again unto God,* in the use of all his holy Institutions. And that I may direct you in this previous examination and trial; Let me advise you in the

First place, To retire for some convenient time where you may take your self alone for the subject of your thoughts and reflections. Certainly this work cannot be perform'd in a hurry, it requires

quires a serious and sober consideration : the Memory must be employed to bring back our sins to our present view : the Judgment to determine without fallacy and disguise what the state of thy Soul is, and the Affections must be wrought upon suitably to our condition. Examination of *ones* self is one of the most difficult undertakings, the Conscience is intricate, and our Hearts are deceitful, and we are apt too often to extenuate the grossest follies and mis-carriages by favourable and benign interpretations : therefore are we to retire from the noise and clamour of the World, that our Souls may be clear and serene like those Regions of the Air, that are above Storms and Tempests : where no Vapour, no Wind can enter : we are to apply the utmost strength of our Souls to this one thing, and therefore we are to gather our thoughts into a recollected frame, and not suffer them to wander abroad until we have brought this Affair to some desirable event.

WE are to meet with God in the most comfortable and sublime Ordinance, and to dress our Souls in their best

best Robes and Wedding-garments. We are to come to this Feast with pure intentions, and to arm our selves with the whole armour of God, and against every Limb of the body of Death. We are to set the pure Law of God before our Eyes, and faithfully to compare our actions with it, and do you think that this can be done by a superficial glance? or can we reverse so easily what is so deeply rooted in our Nature and frame: can we by the slightest attempt overturn the works of Satan? When we remember that we are to be judged for every secret thought, and every idle word, and every evil deed, how impartial and accurate ought we to be in this Examination? when we compare our lives with the Law of God, what a formidable Army of our sins do we at first view perceive? Our omissions, our careless performance of what we do, our injuries towards others, our foolish impertinent, and uncharitable Censures of many, our breach of former Promises and Resolutions, the hardness of our Hearts against the various Methods of Gods Goodness, Patience and Providence, against the light, reproofs, and

Ecclef. 12.

14.

Matth. 12.

36.

2 Cor. 5.

10.

directions of our own Consciences, and the honour of our most holy Profession; now when we have gotten such a sight of our sins, the Prayer of the *Publican* in the *Temple* becomes us, *Lord be merciful to me a sinner.*

2. WHEN you have made an impartial discovery of your Condition, judge thy self with all severity: for *if we judge our selves, we shall not be judged of the Lord.* We are not to judge our selves blindly and with precipitation, but upon a full and clear evidence of our Condition: nor is it enough to pass sentence against our selves in general forms, to acknowledge that we are sinners, but we must confess our particular sins, such as are our sins in a special manner, either by habitual custom, temperament of Body, ordinary Society, or by any other accident or temptation: for without this particular and ingenuous confession we are not assured of what we have done, and consequently not truly penitent. Let us therefore neither hide nor extenuate our sins before God to *whose Eyes all things are naked and open,* and *whose*
word

word divides between the soul and the spirit, who knows our thoughts afar off, and the very first tendencies of our Soul towards evil. Apply the confession of the prodigal Son to thy particular state, Luke 16. and say with true contrition and humility, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.

THE Grace of God cannot grow to any ripeness and perfection but in the Soul that is truly humble, and that sensibly feels it self in the most destitute condition, unless our Saviour speedily interpose for our recovery, and there is no Method so proper to make us truly humble, as to see our selves without disguise, naked, as in the sight of God. When we are stript of our Excuses, and artificial coverings, by which we endeavour to hide our selves from our Neighbours, then we see the vast distance that is between the pure Laws of our Religion, and our loose, careless and disordered lives. God is present with us at all times, and his Eyes pierce to the Center of our Spirits; Let us therefore go to the bot-

tom of the Sore, and examine our actions by that infallible Rule of his Word, and then we must condemn our selves in the most serious, and afflictive strain of true remorse and contrition ; and therefore we find that the most eminent Saints have been most accurate and impartial, in censuring their own sins and transgressions, they were more ingenuous than their most watchful Enemies to aggravate their own follies.

Psalms 73.
21. 22.

Thus my heart was griev'd (saith the Psalmist) and I was pricked in my reins, so foolish was I and ignorant, I was as a beast before thee.

3. WE are to approach this Sacrament with strong resolutions at last to be revenged on our sins. Let us reason our selves out of our former idleness and sloth ; if we are truly griev'd for our sins, we must break thorough the ordinary Obstacles that formerly kept us in bondage. Is there no strength in this Sacrament to break those Iron bars by which we are shut up under the power of our sins? Are our bonds so strong that they cannot be shaken off? Are our Appetites so violent and unruly

ruly that they cannot be resisted? Were not others encompassed with the same flesh and infirmities, and yet happily made free? And shall we miserably groan under the load of our sins, even though we feel that they make us hateful to God? Nay, let us cast our selves under the compassionate Eye of our blessed Lord and Master, and beseech him, that he would let us feel the *power of his Resurrection*; and break our Captivity, that he would let us know that *He that is in us is stronger than He that is in the World*; that his Wisdom and Strength may interpose to help our weakness and folly; that He would gird his victorious *Sword upon his thigh*, and eradicate our evil Habits: *Let God arise, and let his Enemies be scattered*, and fly before his presence. Our resolutions must not only be vigorous and fervent, but fixt against particular sins to which our inclinations are more violent and forward.

4. COME unto the Holy Table with full trust in the mercy of God. *He will not quench the smoking flax, nor*

John 4.

Phil. 1. 6.

Heb. 9. 13,
14, 15.

will he break the bruised reed. He blows upon the first sparks of Sincerity until they are flam'd into perfect zeal and Devotion. The Waters that He gives are a *Well of water springing up unto life eternal*. He will perfect that which he hath begun. The goodness of God and the incomprehensible Love of Jesus are immovable Pillars of our Faith; and therefore we are to fill our Eyes with a prospect of Mercy. He will not deal rigidly with us, neither will he upbraid us with our former guiltiness, when we are prostrate at his feet, when we plead with him by his boundless Compassion and the Abyss of our miseries. The *Blood of Jesus* is the true Atonement, and *propitiation for the sins of the World*; So reasons the Author to the *Hebrews*, that the *blood of Jesus* must be of (infinitely) greater force than that of *Bulls and Goats*, and the *ashes of an Heifer*; for he offered himself without spot unto God, and that through the *eternal Spirit*, and therefore he lives for ever to make *intercession for us*, and if we believe the sufficiency and merit of his Sacrifice, we must also be persuaded of the real efficacy of this Sacrament to convey the Merits

Merits of Christs blood to every penitent Communicant. This may be easily discern'd by its contrary influence on the prophane and impenitent; If he *that eats and drinks unworthily, eats and drinks damnation*, then certainly it is must convey life, strength, light and comfort to the truly penitent. Indeed, when we look narrowly to the nature of it, it is one of the surest Pillars of our Faith; for *this we do in remembrance of his Death and Passion; and his blood that speaketh better things than the blood of Abel, is still of the same force and value with God.* Let us not therefore entertain narrow Notions of the Almighty as if he delighted in the death of sinners, as if he took pleasure in their miseries; for *God is Love*, and it is below his infinite Majesty to crush to ruin and destruction such as appeal to his Mercy. If thou hatest thy sins, if thou perceivest how vile they make thee, and how miserable; if thou implore the goodness of God to deliver thee, thy freedom is already begun, and God will advance it into a full Victory.

Matth. 5.
23.

Matth. 6.
14.

Matth. 18.
24. &c.

5. COME unto this Sacrament reconciled to thy Brother; Peace and Love are the dispositions that make our Souls fit Mansions for the Holy Ghost; the vapours and smoak of Contention drive him from our Habitations. This is one of our Saviours great directions in his Sermon on the Mount; *therefore if thou bring thy gift to the Altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee, leave there thy gift before the Altar, go thy way, first be reconciled to thy brother; and then come and offer thy gift.* If the Sacrament of the Altar be not here strictly meant, yet by the nearest Adalogy and consequence it is intended; and the most judicious Interpreters think that our Saviour gave this direction, with a special Eye to that Sacrament, which he was afterwards to appoint. And the same direction for the matter is repeated, *If you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.* The unreasonable rigidity of the Bankrupt servant towards his fellow, is loathsom in the Eyes of God and of all good men. We are exhorted by

by St. Peter, to lay aside all malice and ^{1 Pet. 2. 1.} all guile, and hypocrisies and envies, and all evil speakings. And we are inform'd by St. Paul, that Love is the ^{Gal. 5.} fulfilling of the Law, and that the works of the flesh are manifest, among which are reckon'd hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, but the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. When we consider the nature of our Religion, the whole tendency and design of the Gospel, we must conclude that there is nothing more opposite unto its harmonious and blessed temper, than malice and revenge; and therefore we must be ruled by other measures than those that prevail most in the World. He is thought mean-spirited, low and abject that is ready to forgive an injury, yet it is the height of true Courage and Magnanimity, if we consider the whole Scheme of our Religion, how much it is twisted with meekness, gentleness, and charity; or the supreme Authority of God, to whom Vengeance doth belong, our own inward Peace and

Tran-

Coloss. 3.
12, 13, 14

Tranquility, or the order and settlement of publick Societies, we cannot refuse to comply with our Saviour's direction, and therefore St. Paul commands us, that as we desire to approve our selves the *Elect of God*, *holy and beloved*, that we put on *bowels of compassion, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long suffering, forbearing one another, if any man have a quarrel against any*, and that above all we put on *Charity which is the bond of perfectness*. True and universal Charity is the great glory and perfection of our Religion, in which Christians ought to outshine all others. It is that by which we resemble our Father above, and prove our selves to be *his off spring* in the highest and truest sense. Our blessed Saviour, after He had commanded us to *love our Enemies*, concludes with this, *Be ye therefore perfect as your Father which is in heaven is perfect*. The Jews themselves who were indulged, or rather connived at, to be more rugged and untractable than the Christians, were yet obliged to shew many acts of benevolence to their Enemies

of

Matth. 5.
48.

The Twelfth Sermon.

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of their own Nation and Profession. And many of the Philosophers did look up on the forgiving of injuries as an instance of true Valour and Fortitude.

Exod. 23^d

45.
Sen. Magni animi est injurias despicere.

NEXT, Let us consider, that Hatred, and Variance, and Strife, make us unfit for any particular act of Worship, and therefore are we commanded in our Prayers to *lift up holy hands without wrath and doubting.* And secondly, Contention and Enmity exclude us from all hopes of Pardon, as oft as we say the Lords Prayer, we appeal to the Omniscience of God, that we desire to be pardoned no otherwise than we heartily pardon and forgive the lesser injuries of our Brethren done to us, and if we retain in our hearts the seeds of Rancour and Malice against our Brethren, we pronounce sentence against our selves, we change our Prayers into imprecations, and instead of the great blessings of Peace and Pardon, we are consign'd over to the saddest doom and horror. Then let us consider that if we are commanded to lay aside our prejudices and evil designs against such

as

as have provoked us, how much more ought we to forbear affronting of them who were never injurious to us ; and therefore we must recompence evil for evil to no Man, we must be tender-hearted and charitable to the poor and necessitous ; Alms and Fasting are said to be the two Wings by which our Prayers fly to the Throne of God ; the Providence and Promise, the Power and Goodness of God, are all engaged in defence of the charitable Man ; this is the universal Voice of the New and Old Testament, the language of Nature and Religion ; Jew and Gentile, do acknowledge it from all the ties of Virtue and Humanity. Let us therefore remember the hardships of them who are indigent, their sad groans and lamentable sighs, and according to our ability relieve them, not scrupulously weighing our own strength, so much as their straits and calamity. Let us *not lay up treasure upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, but in heaven, where they are not expos'd to any danger or decay, still remembering, that he that soweth sparingly shall reap sparingly.* When we are thus
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Matth.

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far prepar'd we cannot but feel the sharpest hunger after this spiritual Food; our Souls are then inflam'd with the strongest desires, we breath after God in the affections and language of the Psalmist;

As the Hart panteth after, the Water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O Psalm 42.
verse 1, 2.

God, my soul thirsteth for God, for the living God, when shall I come and appear before God? When shall I converse with him in the most intimate manner, that this state of frailties and weakneses can allow of?

The Solemnities of Religion recruit our strength against our Lusts and corruptions, we are made more chearful and resolute to grapple with our Enemies, when we feel the influences of his Spirit uniting us to God, and exposing to our view all our former sins in all their deformities; we conclude from such excellent beginnings, that we

shall be made more than Conquerours through Jesus Christ that loved us; and we resign our selves to his conduct and goodnes, and by them we put to silence all our fears and anxieties, Why

art thou cast down, O my Soul, and why art thou disquieted within me?

Why art thou cast down, O my Soul, and why art thou disquieted within me?

Why art thou cast down, O my Soul, and why art thou disquieted within me?

Why art thou cast down, O my Soul, and why art thou disquieted within me?

Psalm 42.

hope 11.

thou

The Twelfth Sermon:

*thou in God for I shall yet praise him,
who is the health of my Countenance and
my God.*

*To God the Father, Son, and
Holy Ghost, be all Praise,
Power and Dominion, for
evermore. Amen.*

A

A
S E R M O N

Preached at the
F U N E R A L
Of the Right Honourable
W I L L I A M
Viscount of *Strathallan*,

Lieutenant-General of all His MA-
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S E R M O N

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JOHN XI. 25.

Jesus said unto her, I am the Resurrection and the Life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. Compared with 1 Cor. 15. 12, 13, 14. Now, if Christ be preached, that he rose from the dead, how say some among you, that there is no resurrection from the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen; and if Christ be not

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risen,

The Thirteenth Sermon.

*risen, then is our preaching vain,
and your faith is also vain.*

THE first Sentence that I have read, is placed in the Frontispiece of the Office for the *Burial of the Dead*; the clear foresight we have of our after subsistence, being the only, and the strongest Antidote against the Terrors of Death, and the Solemnities of our Entrance into the Grave. What more proper to be told the *Sisters of Lazarus*, than that which rais'd their thoughts from the Corruptions of the Earth, to that State of Celestial Vigour, to which we shall arrive one day, when we shake off the Dishonours of Weakness and Mortality. The Article of the *Resurrection* is the great Pillar of the *Christian Faith*, the Cornerstone of our *Religion*; our Hope is founded on it: and, as the *Apostle* reasons, our Belief without it is but one continued Fable and Imposture. This alone hath in it the Strength and Quintessence of all Consolation; and there is no remedy against our present Trouble, but

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but to believe our condition shall be changed into a better. Humane Nature feels it self relieved by no other thought, than the sure prospect of our happiness to come : The wise sayings and pretty knacks of the Philosophers, who had no view of the Resurrection, did avail but little to support the Mind against Grief and Sorrow. So S. Paul concludes, *that if in this life only we had hope, we were of all men the most miserable.* ^{1 Cor.} There was indeed a general Tradition of the Immortality of the Soul, that had overspread Mankind; and so much we might gather from the Writings of *Cicero* and *Seneca*. But to believe, that the dispers'd parts of a Mans Body shall be rang'd and dispos'd into their true order and situation, after they have been scatter'd thorough all the Corners of the Earth, that they shall be reduc'd unto a temper fit to serve the Soul in all its Vital Functions, that those Atoms shall be joyn'd to that Spirit from whom they have been separated, *was* and *is* the peculiar Belief of the *True Church*.

WE cannot think of our utter Dissolution, without horror and amazement ;

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we are naturally enemies to *Sadducism*, and *death* in its strictest Notion. The most barbarous Nations have something in their Rites and Religious Ceremonies, that carry their thoughts beyond

Abitio, letum, fera, somnus, festus abitionem antiqui dicebant mortem. Apud Meursium lib. de funere, cap. 1.

the Grave. The very Phrase by which the ancient Romans did express Death, let us see, that they could not with patience think of being entirely extinct and annihilated, when their Souls left their earthly habitations.

As for the *Jews*, they could not but be fully acquainted with the Doctrine of the Resurrection, though not from the Law of *Moses*; yet the sayings of their Wise Men, the Comments and Predictions of their *Prophets*, the Traditions of the *Patriarchs* did establish them fully in the Belief of the Resurrection. As we are informed by the Prophecies of *Daniel* and *Job*: And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt; and they that be wise, shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to

Dan. 12.
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righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever. Could any of the Christians prophesie with greater assurance of the Resurrection than Job*? I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. And though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God; whom I shall see for my self, and mine eyes shall behold; and not another, Job 19.25. 26. 27.

Its the Observation of S. Hierom upon these words, that none spoke so clearly of our Saviours Resurrection and his own, as Job before the Incarnation did. Hierom. prefat. in lib. Job.

And the following Prophets teach the same Doctrine. Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise: Awake, and sing ye that dwell in dust, for the dew is, as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead. But the Doctrine of the Resurrection hath received much Evidence and Certainty from our Lord Jesus Christ himself, who brought life and immortality

John. *The hour is coming when they that are in the grave, shall hear the voice of the Son of God, &c.*

lity to light by the Gospel : who not only asserts it frequently, but proves it convincingly from the Books of Moses, by the

Matth. 22. 31. *clearest and most undeniable consequence ; I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob ; God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.*

IT is needless for me, or my design, to trouble you with the more accurate inquiry of the order and coherence of those Words that I have read, either out of the Gospel, or the Epistle, though we should disjoin them from their neighbour places, yet they are entire in themselves, full of light and comfort ; *Martha* told our Saviour (her Faith now being almost overcome with Grief) *that he was highly in favour with God*, and so probably might prevail with him, and obtain any thing he desired : Our Saviour assures her, that her Brother shall rise again ; this puts some life into her expectations, and she seemed artificially to wave what she hoped ; and did insinuate, that she understood him of the general Resurrection.

tion. But he quickly saw into the darkest recesses of her mind, and told her plainly, that there was no necessity to let her thoughts fly so far off, as the general Resurrection: He who was the first efficient cause of the Resurrection, and the Author of Life, was himself present, and so might when he pleas'd raise his subjects and followers from the captivity and dishonours of the Grave.

FROM both the places that I have read, I invite your attention to Meditate, *First*, On the Resurrection of our Saviour, as the Author and finisher of our Faith. *Secondly*, Our Resurrection who believe in him. *Thirdly*, The Interest that we have in his purchase by our adherence to him, and dependence on him. *He that believes on me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.*

First, THAT our Saviour did raise himself from the dead is certain, else our Religion is but a fable and a lying vanity. It is S. Paul's own Inference to the *Corinthians*, *If Christ be not risen, then our faith is in vain, and we are yet*

Luke 24.
v. 46.

Pfal. 110.

in our sins. And so our Saviour tells the Disciples, *that Christ must needs suffer and rise from the dead the third day.* The Spirit of Prophecy did enlighten the Jewish Church, and foretold the success, glories and triumphs of the Messias: *He shall drink of the brook in the way, therefore shall he lift his head.* And Isa. 53. 10. *That when he made his Soul an offering for sin, he should prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord should prosper in his hand;* That because he had poured out his Soul unto death, God would divide him a portion with the Great, and he should divide the Spoils with the strong. All those Predictions have the Resurrection of our Saviour in their bosom, and without it they are nothing. When he was declared to be the Son of God by the Resurrection from the dead, the suspicions concerning his Person were remov'd; he appear'd then *to be the Christ of God, the Lord of all things, the Judge of the world:* And his mean equipage, bitter pains and shameful disgraces, did but heighten and inflame the Zeal and Devotion of Jew and Gentile. How mysterious was the stratagem of his Love,

to hide the Glories of his Divinity, to obscure the brightness of his Majesty by the interposal of human Nature, to cloath himself with our flesh, *that he* Heb. 2. 14. *might die, that through death, he might overcome him that had the power of death; and by his omnipotence raise himself from death and the grave. For though he was* 2 Cor. 13. *crucified through weakness, yet he liveth* 4. *by the power of God. He was put to death as a notorious Malefactor, exposed to the reproach and contempt of all Nations, treated as an Enemy to God and to true Religion, his adversaries insulted over him as one stricken, smitten* Isa. 53. 4. *of God. But when it appear'd that he was the mighty Favorite of Heaven by his Resurrection from the Dead; how did this confute their Reasonings? How did it baffle their Accusations? How did it upbraid their Ignorance and scatter their vain Surmises, and aggravate their incurable Malice? Since he must needs be acknowledged to be the *Messias* in defiance of all spite and contradiction. The stone which the builders refus'd, *be* Psal. 118. *came the head-corner-stone of the building.* 12. *Being found in fashion as a man, he humbled* Phil. 2. 8, *himself, and became obedient unto death,* 9, 10, 11. *even**

Revel.

Rom. 8.
33, 34, 35.

even the death of the Croſs; Wherefore God alſo hath highly exalted him, and given him a name, which is above every name, that at the name of Jeſus every knee ſhould bow; of things in heaven and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every Tongue ſhould confeſs that Jeſus Chriſt is Lord to the glory of God the Father. Now the human Nature is raiſ'd above the Angelical, in the Perſon of our Saviour. And the hoſts of heaven fall down before him that was dead and is alive and dies no more, and every creature which is in heaven and in earth and under the earth, and ſuch as are in the ſea, ſay with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was ſlain, to receive power and riches, and wiſdom, and ſtrength, and honour, and glory, and bleſſings. The very thought of it delivers us from all our fears as the value and merit, from our offences. This is the Triumphant Song of the Chriſtian Church; the ſtrong Tower we flie to in all our ſtraits and difficulties, the immovable Author of our Faith. Who is he that condemneth? It is Chriſt that died, yea, rather that is riſen again; who is even at the right hand of God, who alſo maketh interceſſion for us.

us. The meditation of it is the strongest inducement to a holy life; for *he was rais'd to bless us, in turning every one of us from our iniquities; For as he was* Acts 3.26. *rais'd from the dead by the glory of the Father.* Even so we also should walk in Rom. 6.4. *newness of life.* And if you be present Colos. 3.1. *with Christ seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.* Do we worship him that is risen from the dead, and brake thorow the Iron barrs of death, and yet remain captive our selves, under the tyranny and bondage of our sins? Let it appear by our heavenly Conversation, that we are acted by a Spirit superior to the World, that we are *born of God, that he that is* 1 John 3. *in us, is stronger than he that is in the* 10. *world; for in this the Children of God are manifest, and the Children of the Devil, whosoever doth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.* Do we believe that our Saviour is victorious over Death and the Grave, and yet shall we remain slaves to our Lusts and Passions? Let the contrary appear that we are united to him in the closest manner, encouraged by his Promises, and enliven'd by his Spirit:

Phil. 4. 8. *Spirit : Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.* And this is the most proper method to prove to the World the Resurrection of our Saviour, and the divinity of our Religion, and this was the Argument that the first Christians made frequently use of to confound their Adversaries. For how can we be made partakers of the Divine Nature but by the Divine Power? Shall we live a Life more pure and heavenly than the rest of Mankind if we are not inspir'd with a Spirit not only opposite to, but above the maxims, principles, and genius of the World? Shall the *Scythians, Persians and Romans* forsake their fierceness, lasciviousness and pride, and become calm, and chaste, and humble, if they have no other rule to direct them than the glimmerings of Nature and weak essays of Philosophy? Is it possible that we can overcome the Inclinations of Nature, Lust, Passion and Revenge, but by a Spirit higher than Nature?

Orig. con.
Cels.

ture? Can evil Habits be so soon removed? Or can the *Ethiopian change his Skin*? If we are then changed from what we were, to the true use of our Reason, and the acknowledgments of the Deity, and the practice of all Vertue: To what cause can this change be imputed, but to the Divine Spirit of Jesus, whose powerful intercession prevails to Redeem us from under the dominion of all Error, Darkness and Prejudice. Do we then believe in *Christ risen from the dead*? Let us live no more Cor. to sin, but unto him that died for us, and rose again that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.

THE Meditation of our Saviour's Resurrection puts us beyond all doubt and hesitation as to our own Resurrection, for he rose again as our Captain, our Head, our Mediator, and in our Name. And this leads me to the Second particular I proposed to speak to.

2. THAT though we sleep in the dust of the Earth, we shall be raised again by his Power: *He is risen as the first born from the dead, and the first fruits*

John

Rom. 8. 11

Rom. 6. 5.

Thes. 4.

fruits of them that sleep, as our forerunner and advocate : He went unto the Heavens to prepare a place for us, that where he is, there we may be also? And we shall follow *ὁν ἰδὲν τὰ ὄντα* in due rank and season as the younger Sons of the Resurrection, we shall be raised under his standard and conduct so reasons the Apostle S. Paul, *If the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in us, he that raised up Jesus from the dead, shall also quicken our mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in us.* And again, *If we have been planted with him in the likeness of his death, we shall also grow up in the likeness of his Resurrection.* And the same Apostle to the *Thessalonians* assures us that, *if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep through Jesus will God bring with him.* Our Resurrection from the Dead stands in our *Creed* as one of the great Articles of our Faith, the Revelation of it is clear, and I need not prove it by a particular allegation of places, for S. Paul concludes, that *if the dead rise not*, our Faith and all our Hopes that depend upon it are wholly vain and impertinent. It's true, the Carnal World did

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did struggle against the belief of the Resurrection: And the Athenians could not forbear to laugh at S. Paul when he advanced this new Doctrine.

And * Minutius Felix, in his excellent Dialogue proves how reasonable it is for us to believe it, though the external Evidences for it were not so undeniable, when once we come to

* Min. Fæl. Pag. 326. edit. Lugdun. Bat. Idem ibidem Corpus omne sive arefcit in pulverem, sive in humorem solvitur, vel in cinerem committitur, vel in nidorem tenuatur subducitur nobis, sed Deo elementorum custodi reservatur. Lactan. Lib. 7. cap. 23.

have true notions of the Deity. Did he Create us from nothing? And is it so difficult to him to make us up when we are broken and scattered? Can any particle of our dust and ashes be hid from the eyes of his omniscience? And this is the current Argument of the Fathers? Or as the same Author reasons, though we are dried into dust, or dissolved into water, or scattered into ashes, can we be removed from the sight of him that weighs the Mountains in scales, and numbers the sands upon the Sea shore? Isa. And then he goes forward to prove the Resurrection from congruities in Nature, and the vicissitude of Things. Vide adeo

quædam insolatium nostri resurrectionem suam

Idem ibidem pag. 328.

turam

Phil. 4. 8. Spirit : *Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any vertue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.* And this is the most proper method to prove to the World the Resurrection of our Saviour, and the divinity of our Religion, and this was the Argument that the first Christians made frequently use of to confound their Adversaries. For how can we be made partakers of the Divine Nature but by the Divine Power? Shall we live a Life more pure and heavenly than the rest of Mankind if we are not inspir'd with a Spirit not only opposite to, but above the maxims, principles, and genius of the World? Shall the *Scythians, Persians and Romans* forsake their fierceness, lasciviousness and pride, and become calm, and chaste, and humble, if they have no other rule to direct them than the glimmerings of Nature and weak essays of Philosophy? Is it possible that we can overcome the Inclinations of Nature, Lust, Passion and Revenge, but by a Spirit higher than Nature?

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suram, omnis natura medietar. The Sun goes down and rises again, and the frame of Nature seems to die in the winter, and when the spring returns they put on their garments of life and joy. So universally is the Doctrine of the Resurrection preach'd by every Creature under Heaven. But I will not insist on this, I'll rather endeavour to lead your thoughts into the inferences that naturally arise from it. And first, are we raised again? Is the fabrick of our bodies rebuilt by infinite Wisdom? Then, with what peace and assurance, with what quietness and serenity may we lay them down in the Grave? It was no wonder that the stoutest Philosophers amidst all their speculations, could not reason themselves into this composition of Spirit at the approach of Death; for the strength of all their Arguments was but of little value to calm the tempests and the fears that arose in their Breasts, when this Enemy of Nature drew near them: Nothing can allay those commotions but the steadfast belief of the Resurrection, and the hopes of Immortality. Then may we say in the language of the Psalmist, *Tea, though I walk thorow the valley of the*

the shadow of death I will fear no evil, for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. And is not this enough to make thee quiet and resigned, that thou art assured when thy Soul goes to the invisible regions of Light and Purity, thy Body also (however scatter'd, divided and dispers'd) shall again be rejoyned to thy Spirit? And ought we to doubt of the Divine Power to accomplish this? Since the forming of our Bodies in the Womb from so small a beginning, unto such a beautiful structure, furnished with so many exact Proportions and Features, was no less the effect of Divine Power, than the raising it again when reduced to dust and ashes. How chearfully did the first Martyrs sacrifice their Bodies for the love of *Jesus*? The Executioners might divide Soul and Body, but they could destroy neither, they might cut, and pierce, and lance and throw their flesh to the wild-beasts, but still they were within the Territories of their great Creator: And when the voice of the Arch-Angel sounds, the dead are made to hear it, and the Sea must give an account of its dead; and the Earth must open her dark vaults and cayerns, and thrust up her Inhabi-

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rants to appear at the publick Rendevouze of the Resurrection, to receive according to what they have done in the Body.

ARE we raised from the dead? We ought to treat the bodies of our dead with care and honour: All civiliz'd Nations agree in this, nor can there be a piece of greater barbarism and inhumanity, than to deny the rites of Sepulture, even to our very Enemies. The Poet could not express the height of cruelty and rudeness otherways than to say, that the honour of Burial was denied.

Vid. Mercurium de funere.

*Claudian
de bello
Gildomico.*

—— *hominemque cruentus,
Exiit & tenuem cassis invidet arenam.*

Though the methods of particular Countries vary, yet all agree to perform Funerals with great solemnity, The most natural way is to bury them in the Earth, and it is the most ancient of all others, as we see in the Holy Oracles, Gen. 23. 4. And though the Persians did burn the bodies of the dead, yet Herodot tells us that the method of Inhumation was more ancient

ancient among the *Egyptians* and the *Persians* : And when the *Roman Empire* became *Christian*, the old custom was resumed, and the bodies of the dead were committed to the Earth. *Diodorus*

Min. Fæl. p. 327. Nec ut creditis ullum damnum sepulture timemus sed veterem & meliorem consuetudinem humandi frequentamus.

Siculus informs us how critically nice the *Egyptians* were in performing the Funeral Rites, that the persons employed about the dead were divided in so many ranks and orders, and to each their proper part was assign'd ; And the *Greeks* and *Romans* were no less careful about their dead : And no doubt, our most holy Religion strengthens the obligation, and the Scriptures remark the Funerals of the *Patriarchs*, and the care of their Relations in that matter.

S. Augustin discourses at length to this purpose, that our bodies are a part of us, and though they are laid

De civitate Dei. lib. 1. cap. 13. nullo modo ipsa spernenda sunt corpora (defunctorum) &c.

aside, yet we have not lost all relation to them, which made the holy *Patriarchs* command their Children to transport their bodies from one place to another, that their ashes might sleep with their Ancestors : How boldly did the first

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Christians venture their Lives to procure the bodies of the Martyrs which the cruelty of their Persecutors left unburied.

* *Cypr. Epist. 8. edit. Oxon. circa finem & quod maximum est corpora Martyrum si non sepeliantur, grande periculum imminet eis quibus incumbit hoc opus.*

And * *S. Cyprian* tells us how dangerous it is to omit it, and that we should expose our selves to all hazards rather than leave it undone. Neither did the Piety of the ancient Christi-

ans confine it self to those of their own Religion, but frequently did bury the *Pagans* deserted by their Relations; and they thought it not enough to inshrine the remains of their fellow Christians in Tombs and Sepulchres, but also prepared their Bodies for their Funeral with the richest odours, spices and perfumes, the best drugs and ointments they thought but too mean to express their tender regard to their deceased Friends. So *Tertullian* in his Apology tells us, that the most curious Spiceries the *Sabeans* could afford were employed this way. When *Mary Magdalen* poured Ointment on our *Saviour's* Head, he approved it as done to anoint *his body to the burial*. And the good women mentioned by *S. Luke*, prepared *their ointments*

Tertul. Apolog. cap. 42.

Mark 14.8. Luk. 23. 56.

ments and sweet odours to embalm his body. All this was done because they looked upon the body as the *expectant* of a joyful Resurrection. And hence we *commit it unto the earth, in the sure and certain hope of the resurrection.* For when they have varied all forms and figures, they are again built up immortal and more delicate habitations for our Spirits.

3. LET the thoughts of the Resurrection comfort us concerning our departed Friends and Relations. Its S. Paul's own inference. *But I would not* Thef. 4. *have you ignorant brethren concerning* ^{13.} *them that are asleep, that you sorrow not even as others which have no hope.* Vers. 16. *For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first, wherefore comfort one another with these sayings.*

4. LET the thoughts of the Resurrection comfort us in our present troubles. O happy day! when we are brought again into the light, after so many nights of darkness and solitude; when our bodies appear with their brighter robes, when flesh and blood are Spiritualised and

invigorated with the warmth of the Sun of Righteousness, and our heavy Earth is *calcined* and purified for its true Employment, that it may serve the Soul in its swiftest thoughts, and vye with the Seraphims of Light and Zeal in their attendance on their Creator. Now the Earthly Tabernacle drags and pulls down the Soul to low and despicable Enjoyments; then, the Body is made strong and refined to comply with the highest Capacities and Inclinations of the Mind. We shall mount aloft from the Earth into the Air, *we shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and as the stars for ever and ever*; when we are got loose from the Prisons of Darkness and the Fetters of Corruption are broken off: When we see the Glories and Empires of this little Globe below us, and we our selves beyond danger and temptation, far above its frowns and flatteries.

How strongly do we then feel our selves united to our true and immovable Happiness, and assimilated to the Blessed Temper and Employment of the Hosts of Heaven, and the Spirits of *just men made perfect*. When instead of this load of clay, the uneasie weight that holds our Spirits in Captivity, *we shall then be clothed upon*

2. Cor. 5,
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upon with our house which is from heaven, when mortality shall be swallowed up of life. The very thoughts of this Elevation and Purity, to think that when he shall appear, we shall be like him (for we shall see him as he is) might fill our Souls with the strongest Ardors and Impatience to be with Christ, to be above the Clouds and the vicissitudes of this unquiet World.

We cannot express the glory of the Body after the Resurrection better than in the language of the Scripture. There is one glory of the Sun, another of the Moon, and another of the stars, so also is the resurrection of the dead; it is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption, it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory, it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power, it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. And thus we are told by the same Apostle to the Philippians; That he shall change our vile bodies that they may be fashioned like unto his glorious body by the power whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself. What a mighty support is it for us at the approach of death, to

1 Cor. 15.

41.

Pſalm 42.
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2 Cor. 4.
16.

reason our ſelves out of our fear and diffidence, to get above the terrour and the thought of our diſſolution, and ſtrengthen our ſelves in view of the Glory that is to come! Let us ſay in the words of the *Pſalmiſt*, *Why art thou caſt down, O my Soul, and why art thou diſquieted within me? Hope thou in God, for I ſhall yet praiſe him who is the health of my Countenance, and my God.* The Meditation of this joyful Day puts us beyond all Calamities, ſets our feet upon a Rock, and makes us look down with Magnanimity on all the changes of this lower World: for when our Eyes are fix'd upon thoſe purer Pleaſures, what can diſturb the peace and tranquillity of our Spirits? *For which cauſe we faint not, but though our outward man periſh, yet our inward man is renewed day by day: for our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of Glory.* The proſpect of that ſtate and felicity makes us forget this fooliſh World and trample on all its glories with a generous diſdain and contempt, when we remember, that we are heirs of God and coheirs with Chriſt, of that

that inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled,
and that fadeth not away.

5. But fifthly, **THE** belief of the Resurrection arms us more immediately against the terrours of Death. Thus *St. Paul* discourses in the fifteenth Chapter of the first Epistle to the *Corinthians* and 54. verse. So when this corruptible hath put on incorruption, and this mortal hath put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass this saying that's written, Death is swallowed up of victory, O death, where is thy sting, O grave where is thy victory? The King of terrours is rifled, his Forces are broken, we have an Antidote against his Poison; Let him come in his blackest dress, in his most dismal Robes of darkness and fear: Let him appear with all the Solemnities of terrour and sadness, yet the Christian in the midst of all this meets him with undaunted Courage. *He is like* ^{Psalms} *mount Zion which cannot be moved*, he sees beyond those Clouds, he defies all those frowns, he strengthens himself in the death of *Jesus* and his Resurrection from the dead; and the belief of both makes us more than Conquerours. This
is

is the true Philosophy that animates against the pale fears, and gloomy apprehensions of the Grave ; The merry *Archeist*, that braued Death at a distance, begins to tremble when it makes its approaches nearer ; then his Jests and his wanton Efforts of Fancy vanish into fearful expectations ; He flies to his desperate Complaints, uneffectual Wishes and fruitless Prayers (for the time of Prayer is over) but the Christian gathers his Forces and strengthens himself in the Victory, and Sacrifice and Power of our *Lord Jesus Christ*. O how sad is it to delay the examination of our Consciences, the confession of our Sins, the amendment of our Lives, until we have no more time than the few moments that just enter us into the Grave !

6. WHEN we think of the Resurrection, it should spiritualize our Souls, and teach us in our desires and designs to fly above this terrestrial seculent Globe : How come we to be so unwilling to leave those Habitations of sin and misery ? How come we to admire nothing and vanity, when we are Candidates for a heavenly Kingdom ? If ye

Colof. 3. 1

be

be risen with Christ, set your affections on the things that are above, &c. Let the belief of the Resurrection put us in mind of the future Judgment. For, he hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath Acts 17. *given assurance unto all men, in that he* 31. *hath raised him from the dead. Can we think of that solemn Appearance without fear? And if we call on the Father who without respect of persons judg-* Pet. *eth every man according to his works; Let us pass the time of our sojourning here in fear. Let our zeal appear more and more in trimming and preparing our Souls for Eternity. That we may* Phil. 3. *know him and the power of his Resurre-* 10. *ction, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death, if by any means we may attain unto the resurrection of the dead.*

THE third thing I proposed to speak to, is the Interest that our faith gives us in a happy Resurrection, I mean such a lively faith as is recommended to us in the Gospel. Not every one that saith Lord, Lord, but he that doth the will of Matth. my

my Father which is in heaven, I mean the faith that purifies the heart, and overcomes the World, and assimilates us to the temper and Spirit of the blessed Inhabitants above, and makes us more than Conquerors through Jesus Christ that loved us.

MY Lords and Gentlemen, so far have I discours'd of this Consolatory Argument to ease our mind upon this sorrowful occasion. But you see another Text, *viz.* the earthly remains of the noble Viscount of Strathallan. When I remember his true Vertues, I despair to say any thing proportionable to his worth; the naming of him once, suggests greater thoughts than ordinarily occur. When we form to our selves the most perfect Idea's of Valour, and honour and generosity, then we have the best Notion of that great Soul that once lodged in that Tabernacle; All the Projects of his Mind were beyond the common Level. The generous Inclinations he derived from his Ancestors began to appear very early: A Family too well known in Britain for every thing that is great, ancient, loyal and generous,

Earl of
Perth.

generous, to need any particular descants of mine; I am not to act the part of a *Herauld* from this place, there is none capable to be my Hearer, but knows already how needless it is to tell *Scotchmen* of the noble Atchievements and many Illustrious branches of that *Cedar* of which our deceased *General* is descended. He began to bear Arms when as yet he had not strength enough to manage them, the vigour and alacrity of his Spirit out running the growth of his body; He then, when but a Child lodged no thought in his Breast but such as were daring, great and difficult. When he was a Boy at *St. Leonard's College*, he gave all the proof of a docile and capacious Spirit far above any of his School-fellows: but his Mind (that always entertain'd extraordinary Enterprises) began to be weary of an unactive life. Then it was that he was made Captain in that Regiment that went to *Ireland* against the Rebels, under the Command of an old and experienced* Officer. In that expedition, he behaved with so much life and resolution, as drew upon him the eyes of all men, and every body concluded the young Captain was calculated for

St. Andrews.

* *Sir Robt. Monro.*

Tacit. de
vita A-
gricolæ
pag. 711.

for the greatest actions. There are no words so proper for this period of his life, as those we meet with in the life of *Agricola*, *Nec Agricola licenter more juvenum qui militiam in lasciviam vertunt. neque segniter ad voluptates & Commeatus titulum tribunatus & inscitiam retulit: Sed noscere provinciam, nosci exercitui, discere à peritis, sequi optimos, nihil appetere jactatione, nihil ob formidinem recusare, simulque anxius & intentus agere.* And this without the change of one word was his deserved Character, when first he appeared in the Fields.

Argyle
beat at
Stirling,
by Sir
George
Monro.

HE came over from *Ireland* some years after, and assisted those Forces that beat the Rebels once at *Stirling*, and all those Loyal Gentlemen, engaged in that Expedition, upon all occasions bestow'd upon him the most ample Applause, and unforced Commendations that were truly due to his skill, conduct and fidelity.

AFTER this, *General Drummond* and all his Associates became so odious to the prevailing Faction of the *Covenanters*, that (until the Mock-repentance

tance after *Dunbar fight*) he was not suffered to engage in his *Majesties* Service. Mean while, he went to *London*, and the Forces commanded by his * Friend * Sir George Monro. were disbanded : And there he was a Spectator of that *Tragedy* that pierced his Soul with the most exquisit grief, I mean, *the Martyrdom of King Charles the First* : The Scene he saw, and the preparations to the fatal blow, but more he could not endure. He himself could not afterwards give an account of that consternation that seized his Spirits ; All that's black and terrible invaded his Soul at once , the most dismal Passions struggled within his Breast, confusion and indignation possess his Heart, and nothing but the force of Christian Religion, and the belief of Providence could have preserved his Mind from sinking. How can his great Soul but burst forth into all expressions of Sadness, to see prosperous Villany lift up its head with so much rage and insolence, and despise the Justice of the *Almighty*, and pull down his *Image upon earth*, and sacrifice the best of Men, the best of Kings, to the fury and hypocrisie of the Rabble.

O Hea-

O Heavens ! Let not the Plagues due to the Cry of that sacred Blood fall upon *Britain*. Next day after with all speed he went to *Holland* to the *Prince*, and there he was the first that saluted him *King* ; He came over with his late *Majesty* and commanded a Brigade of that Army that went to *Worcester*, where his Courage and Magnanimity appear'd to the highest degree. And his Actions, even in that Engagement, deserve rather a full History than the transient glances of a *Sermon*. How he broke thorow three Regiments of the Enemy ! how warmly he disputed the matter with the third that were strongly guarded by a Hedge ! how he retired, how he preserved himself and some other Gentlemen in a *Redoubt* all Night ! how he forced the Enemy (even after the Royal Army was beat) to grant him an honourable Capitulation, and was receiv'd as Prisoner of War ! All of them are evidences that the forest Disasters could not break his Spirit. He is then carried to *Windso*r Prisoner, and much about this time, the Earl of *Middleton* and *Dalyell* made their escape out of

of the *Tower*; but the *General* ordered the *Affair* with that dexterity, that he got a poor Fellow accepted Bail for him; And so quickly over he went to his Master, then at *Paris*: So naturally in all the traverses of his Life did he run to the *King*, for whose safety and service he despised all things else, Life, Fortune, Interest and Ease, Loyalty was the spring that gave motion to his great and restless Soul, his active and daring Spirit refused no toil or labour by which he might serve the Royal Family.

AT *Paris* he received his *Majesties* Commands, and many Letters and *Commissions* for the *Nobility* and *Gentry* that yet adhered to the afflicted Cause of true Honour and Loyalty: He came over then himself in the quality of *Major General*, he landed near *Tarmouth* in *England*, with a double bottom'd Trunk in disguise, in which were laid his *Majesties* Letters and *Commissions*: From thence he came to *Newcastle*, then to *Kelso*, from *Kelso* to the *Earl of Roxborough's house*, from thence to *Edinburgh*, in the habit of an ordinary Carrier: From *Edinburgh* to the

General Drummond in disguise.

West-ferry where he was almost discovered to be another than what he appear'd, by one of the Usurper's Spies: But the *divine Providence* watched over his Person; He got rid of this Fellow, and went to *Elplingstoun*, and being provided of a Boat that afternoon, he came quickly to this Country, so wearied and disguised, that his nearest Relatives could not know him.

Now though he had most dexterously disguised his Complexion, yet how difficult was it to hide and obscure his noble Genius; notwithstanding of his sorry Horse and his load of Cheese, he could not persuade the People with whom he lodged upon the Road, but that he was some extraordinary Person, upon every turn they saw something in him above their Level; they knew not what he was, but they were sure he was none of their Gang; He was out of his Element as a Fish upon dry Land; And though his Cap, Perruque and his Beard made him appear another thing, yet he could not hide his Looks; and the poorest of the People saw in him something they could not name, but still
above

above fervility and meanness, the Artifice of his Design could not raze out the Signatures of Greatness that God had stamped upon his Soul and Body.

WHY should I enter upon the History of that unfortunate Expedition? You all know the event of it; The sins of *Britain* stood in the way of our Recovery, and our *Nation*, (for their contempt of God and their King) groan'd under the Yoke of Anarchy, Confusion and prophane Pedantry; And those generous *Hero's* that strove to recover the *Kings* Affairs at that time in *Scotland* were forced to give way to that Current of Impiery and Rebellion that then shook *Monarchy, Order, Religion* and the *Laws*. But there's no fighting against the Decree of Heaven: He might have truly said of his Country what the *Roman* Virg Æneid. lib. 2. *Poet* makes *Hector* say of himself

—— *Si Pergama dextrâ
Defendi possent, &c.*

Yet in the worst Circumstance, the presence of the *Generals* Mind never for-

Seneca de provid. pag.
(mibi) 307. Ecce Specta-
culum dignum, ad quod re-
spiciat intentus operi suo
Deus.

Non video inquam quid
habeat in terris Jupiter
pulchrius, si convertere a-
nimum velis, quam in-
spectet Catonem, jam
partibus non semel fra-
ctis stantem, nihilominus
inter ruinas publicas re-
stum.

Horat. Il-
labatur
orbis im-
pavidum
feriens
vixit.

look him. *Seneca* tells us, that such a Man who struggles with Adversity, and preserves his Soul untainted under the load of Misfortunes, is fit for the Society of the Gods. Who but the great Soul of *General Drummond* would not have sunk under such innumerable Calamities that so fast trod upon the heels of one another, his *Prince* banish'd, his *Country* over-run, his *Army* broken, his *Friends* discouraged, and *Rebellion* become impudent, and all the endeavours of the *Kings* true Servants defeated and disappointed; but all this was not enough to damp his *Cou- rage*.

FINDING in this Juncture that the wrath of God could not be so soon removed from this *Island*; He treated with *Monk* for others of our Nation with great dexterity, onely for himself, and *Dalyell* he would have no share in it, as if he had sworn from his *Infan- cy* against all degrees of *Rebellion* as

Ha-

Hanibal did against the *Romans*, whom Cornel.
 his Father made to touch the Altar Nepos
 with an Oath (when but nine years pag. (mi-
 old) that he should never be reconciled bs) 119.
 to them nor their Interest. He and edit, in u.
 his Friend again both of them stole a sum Del-
 way and went to find their *Sovereign*, phini.
 who then was forced to wander here
 and there for Shelter, and was (as the
 Royal *Psalmist* sometime) *hunted as a* I Sam.
Partridge on the Mountains. But all 26. 20.
 hopes being lost at that time, to serve
 his Majesty. The General and *Dalyell*
 beg'd leave to go for *Moscovia*; which
 they obtain'd, and accordingly took their
 journey. And when he arriv'd at the
 Imperial Camp, the *Emperour of Russia*
 was then lying befor *Riga*, and now we
 have this generous Soul in *Moscovia*, a
 Stranger, and you may be sure the *Cava-*
liers Coffers were not then of great
 weight, but he carried with him that
 which never forsook him till his last
 breath, Resolution above the disasters of
 Fortune, composure of Spirit in the midst
 of Adversity, and Accomplishments pro-
 per for any Station in Court or Camp that
 became a Gentleman.

THE *Emperour of Russia* quickly took notice of him, and immediately he was made a *Collonel*, and soon after *Lieutenant General* of the Strangers. He served the *Emperour of Moscovy* against the *Polonians* and *Tartars* in many *Ren-counters* with great conduct and fidelity. But I must be allowed to mention one instance of his Valour, in which he saved the whole Army that was then sent by the *Emperour of Russia* against the *Poles*, and commanded by *Knez Joury*, who was of extraordinary Reputation among the *Russians*; But in this Encounter when he march'd too near the Enemy, he withdrew all the Cavalry and left our *Scots here* with a small body of Foot, to the mercy of the *Polonian Horse* (perhaps the best in *Europe*,) What shall he do in such Circumstances, must he fly? But that was it he was not acquainted with; He drew up his handful of Men behind some Shrubs which had a Marsh at each end of them, and planted the *Swans feathers* before them: The *Polish Horse* came to assault them in that Post with extraordinary briskness, but were received with so much order

der and resolution, that the first and second Salutes of the *General's Musketeers*, put the Enemy in great disorder, and in defiance of their number, strength and quality he managed his Retreat with so much Success and Conduct, that he got under the Covert of the nearest Wood, by which he saved the whole Army; for if he had been beat, the Main body, (which *Knez Joury* had too hastily withdrawn) would certainly fly, if assaulted while they were in confusion. To manage a Retreat with so small a body of Men, in view, and upon the Nose of so strong an Enemy, was a proof of Conduct and Valour equal to any thing that we meet with in History.

THE *Emperour* could not but upon this resent his Service, and the favour that he had at Court saved *General Dulyell* when so many great Men combined to ruin him: But why should I mention the particular Services that he alone did to the *Imperial Crown of Moscow*. 'Tis an irreparable injury to our Nation, if the Memoirs of his Life be not made publick. Much about this

time he put a considerable relief into a Frontier Town of Great importance formerly belonging to the *Polonians*, but now in the *Emperours* possession: What he did in that Expedition is not only for the Honour of the name of *Drum-*

* *Illa pharetratis est propria gloria Scotis,*

Cingere venatu saltus, superare nantando

Flumina, ferre famem, contemnere frigora, & aestus:

Nec fossa & muris patriam, sed morte tueri,

Et spreta incolumem vita defendere famam,

Polliciti servare fidem, sanctumque vereri

Numen amicitiae, mores, non munus amare.

Artibus his, totum fremerent cum Bella per orbem,

Nullaque non leges tellus mutaret avitas,

Externo subiecta iugo, gens una vorustis

Sedibus antiqua sub liberata resedit. Buch.

mond, but also for the everlasting *Glo-*

ry of the * *Scots.*

None of the *Rus-*

sians would under-

take it; the swiftness of his *March,*

the *Extraordinary*

Stratagem that he

used, the number

and quality of the

Army that he over-

threw, and the sea-

sonable relief he put

into the *Town*, be-

came the wonder

of the whole *Em-*

pire.

SOME years after, the Light of Heaven began to shine upon *Britain*; our *King* and Government was restored: And His late Majesty sent for him and

Dalyell;

Dalyell; and how he behaved for twenty years after his return to his Country, the whole Nation knows, and Envy it self (that ill natured Vice that sullies the brightest Innocence) durst never assault him plainly and openly. For under the pressure of the saddest disadvantages, he never harbour'd one disloyal thought: Such as had occasioned his disgrace with the late King never appeared above board, and such of the great ones as might be suspected to have whisper'd against him plainly disown'd it: And this Transient Cloud (blown up by the breath of malice,) served only to lighten his honour and reputation; which makes me apply to him, what *Tacitus* hath of the formerly named *Agricola*: *Suis virtutibus simul, vitiis aliorumque in ipsam gloriam preceps agebatur.* His Loyalty was untainted, as it was tryed more than seventeen times in the fire of afflictions; it did not change with the mode and fashion, it did not depend upon the Gazette, and News-Letters, but was immoveably founded upon the rules of St. Paul to the Romans 13. Not only for wrath but for Conscience sake. When the Prince is on the Throne, then multitudes of Men offer

offer their Services; but General *Drummond's* Loyalty did bide the rest of all hardships and sufferings. It was not gold and silver, softness and plenty, luxury and ease that bore up his Spirits; but the rewards of a good Conscience, long and cold Nights, bitter northern Frosts, and the murmurs of the River that runs by this house, together with the crowd of his uneasie thoughts for some years made up his ordinary Bill of Fare. The Foxes and Connies became frequently his Companions, and he had no other habitation than their Retreats amidst Rocks and Desarts, his love to his *Prince* took up his thoughts, his time and his endeavours. And thus he lived, and thus he died, Praying for *His present Majesty* with all the marks of Gratitude, true Zeal and Christian Charity; So that I may truly apply to him

Velleius Paterculus, Velleius
num in tantum laudandum,
in quantum intelligi virtus
poteſt.

the Character that *Velleius Paterculus* bestows upon *Lucius Emilius Paulus*. But so far have I considered the General as an Officer of War. But had he no other endowments than his Military Skill and Conduct? Yes certainly, his Soul was enrich'd with a vast treasure

ture of acquired Knowledge, be discour-
ed of all Subjects, Moral, Political, Hi-
storical and Theological, with great
discretion and acuteness. *Cornelius Ta-*
citus tells us, in the (so often cited)
Life of *Agricola*, That most men were
of Opinion that there was little friend-
ship betwixt Arms and Letters: But if
he instanced in *Agricola* to confute this
absurd Opinion, we name *General Drum-*
mound, whose Soul lodged the best parts
of polite Learning; he understood all
the Mathematical Sciences that relate to
War, Fortification and Encamping to a
high degree; he had read the *Roman Hi-*
storians acurately, and it was observed of
him when he was a youth, he took
great delight in reading *Cesar's Commen-*
taries; a Book which the Marquess of
Montrose had almost by heart. He re-
solved to converse with the former Ages
to enlarge his Spirit, and
to read the Lives of the
greatest Captains was his or-
dinary Divertisment: And
it was truly wonderful to
see a Man from his Infancy bred up with
the noise of Drums and Trumpets ac-
quire so much Learning, which made

Velleius Paterculus, of
Scipio Emilianus, Vir om-
nibus belli ac togæ dotibus
præclarus.

Justin

Justin lib. 6. Justin say of Epaminondas, *ut mirabile videretur, unde tam insignis militia scientia homini inter literas nato.* Amongst the

Liv. lib. 39. pag. (mibi) 557. *Ad summos honores alios scientia Furis, alios eloquentia, alios gloria militaris provexit, huic versatile ingenium, sic pariter ad omnia fuit ut natum ad id unum diceret quodcumq; ageret: In bello manu fortissimus, multisq; insignibus clarus, pugnis idem posteaquam ad magnos honores pervenit summus Imperator.*

Ancient Romans, he most resembled Marcus Porcius Cato, who was so framed by Nature, to be equally fitted for all laudable undertakings; every thing he did became him, and he could do all things except only the things which could not be commended. In the last Ages, Julius Cesar Scaliger seems to come near-

est our deceased Hero; for Scaliger was descended of the Ancient Princes of Verona, and General Drummond of one of the Princes of our Country.

Thuanus, Hist. Lib. 21. pag. (mibi) 645. Julius Cesar Scaliger, vir quo superiorem antiquitas vix habuit parem certe hæc ætas non vidit. Nam ut nobilitatem omittam, de qua inter omnes constat ingenio animi, & corporis robore simul omnes equales suos facile superavit.

Julius Scaliger was early bred with Military Discipline, and General Drummond looked after Arms when but a Child; Scaliger was Educated in the Court of Maximilian the Emperour, and our Hero had seen the most splendid and magnificent Courts in Europe. Scaliger did great

great things at the battle of *Ravenna* betwixt the *Emperour* and the *French*; but *General Drummond* in more than a hundred Rencounters signaliz'd his Valour both at home and abroad. *Scaliger* had great marks of the *Emperours* favour, and our *Hero* had greater honours conferr'd on him by *His late and present Majesty*, and the *Emperour of Moscow*. *Scaliger* mixed his martial toil and employment with his studies and intellectual Pleasures, and our *General* seem'd in the midst of all his cares, and dispatches, to have been shapen for the abstrusest parts of Learning. *Scaliger* was said to understand *Physiognomy* and foretell many events concerning particular persons; But *General Drummond* foretold the events and changes in the body political. But *Julius Scaliger* was harsh, proud, sour and vindictive, and could not with patience hear the commendations of his equals; but here I leave *Scaliger*. For *General Drummond* was meek, calm, affable, equal, courteous, belov'd of every body, as he did promote all appearances of vertue and honour in any other where ever he found them; and his accomplishments for Learning were felt by every body

body that understood the true use of Learning. Nothing he abhorr'd more than Ignorance, especially amongst them who desired to be notic'd above their Neighbours.

Pfal. Man that is in honour and understandeth not is like the beasts that perish.

He brought honour to the preferments he possess'd, and valued none but such as naturally fell to him in the true channel of Merit.

3. LOOK upon him as a *Counsellor* to his *Prince*, he never suggested in publick or in private, but what was for the honour of the *King*, the Peace and Tranquillity of the *Subjects*, the regular administration of *Justice* and the safety of *His Majesties Dominions* on all hands. His advice was always temper'd with Prudence, Caution and Foresight; he understood Mankind exactly, and the particular genius of this Nation, so, all his Counsels were even, calm and moderate, never surpriz'd or hurry'd unto any thing precipitate or indeliberate. No Man ever had the resolution of a *Great Captain*, and the gravity of a *Senator* more happily contemper'd.

4. WHAT

4. WHAT need I mention his affability and candor, his charming, inoffensive and pleasant Conversation? Nothing tempestuous, nothing rough, nothing disorderly in his Behaviour, he was of easie access to all ranks of Men, and knew that Men in high Places cannot live without their Inferiors. And if at any time his Anger broke forth into any appearances of Indignation, it was to chastise and drive from him what is base, unjust, ungentle, mean and vicious. Will you consider him in his more familiar Relations, as a Neighbour, as a Husband, as a Father, as a Friend, how amiable in all of them did he appear? Friendship seemed to be his very Element and his proper Air; And as none knew better how to make a choice, so none more stedfast to that sacred tie. The last words he spoke distinctly, were expressions of Friendship to a Person of Quality, with what gratitude was he wont to acknowledge acts of Kindness and Civility done him in the time of his Imprisonment in *England*? Take him altogether, he was a proper

*The Earl of Perth Lord
High Chancellour of Scotland.*

proper standard of Vertue, fit for the imitation of the present Age, and the commendation of Posterity. Would God there were but many such in our Nation, who truly needed so little the artifice of Flattery, and despised it as much as our *Deceased General.*

BUT my Lords and Gentlemen, when I have said this, if I had no more to say, perhaps I had said nothing. All that is splendid and glorious in the Eye of Mortals, is nothing in compare with the Spirit of true Religion. In all his Lifetime, and in all the different Occurrences and Periods of his Troubles, he had deep impressions of the Divinity. Religion in him was not an idle speculation, but broke forth and shined in all his Actions, his devotions to God were fervent, sincere and constant. The expressions of his Charity to his Neighbours were full of affection, love and sincerity: He took his Characters of a Religious Man, not from the dreams and fooleries of Enthusiasm, but from the plain words of *S. James, Who is a wise man and endow'd with knowledge amongst you? Let him shew out of a good conversation his works*

works with meekness of wisdom. And that other of the same Apostle; *Pure religion* Jam. 1.27. *and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the Fatherless, and Widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.* The instances of his Charity have been many and liberal and seasonably conveyed; some of them, visible, great and lasting. Let us follow him to his Death Bed, and see his behaviour there.

BEING of a vigorous and cleanly Constitution, he lived to the Age of Seventy notwithstanding of the constant fatigue of his Life: When he felt that his Disease was like to prove stubborn, and that it resisted the skill and care of the learnedst Physicians, he sent for a pious and grave Divine of our Church, with whom *he took sweet Counsel*, how to order his Soul for its last flight to the other World: And in this interval, gave all evidences of the greatness and goodness of his Spirit. Dr. Char-
teris.

ONE of the Physicians that waited on him, did with all modesty and discretion insinuate that their endeavours

K k were

The Thirteenth Sermon.

were like to have no success; He received the news of Death with all composure and equality of Spirit, he never knew what fear meant, and he met the *King of Terrors*, not with that resolute fullness and stupidity, (that is sometimes observable in the most profligate) but with all calmness and resolution, as became the strength of Faith, the hopes of Immortality and the Majesty of Christian Religion.

Viz. Strathallen & his Lady.

THE frequent attacques of a lingering Disease had now brought him upon the coasts of Eternity, he ordered his worldly Affairs with that speed and discretion that was always visible in all his actions, he gave his Fatherly Advice and Blessing in the most Christian and composed manner to his dearest Relatives, and marks of his Favour and Bounty to all his Servants. And all this with that exactness of Memory and undisturb'd Judgment that ever attended him, he omitted nothing that was to be done: And then he beseeched such as were about him, *in the Bowels of Jesus Christ* to give him no more trouble about worldly Affairs, so he left the World in his Thoughts and Meditations,

Meditations, and looked stedfastly to *the things that are above*, and by frequent flights and ejaculations to Heaven was loosed from the Body (from all the interests and concerns of it) before he left his earthly habitation. How weak are the strongest Chains that tye us to the Earth, when we are thus illuminated, when we are near our heavenly Country, when the Soul begins to taste of *the rivers of pleasure that are at Gods right hand?* Then she gathers together her spiritual Forces, and the World becomes so insipid, that she can relish nothing but the Fruits of *the Tree of Life*. O happy day! when we have run thorow the difficult stages of a wearisom World, we then can say in the Apostles Language, *We know that if this our earthly house were broken down, we have houses with God not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.*

LET us enter into the Grave before we are carried thither, and from thence view the various tossings of mens thoughts to scramble together the heaviest pieces of the Earth, how soon do the glories of it vanish into a shadow, and the painted nothings that we foolishly

Psal.

ly admire are found empty and unsatisfying. Are those the things we are to hunt after? Are we made for them? Have not we vast appetites and inclinations beyond them? Can they serve us in our greatest extremities? Let us remember then wherefore we are made; *For here we are but Pilgrims and Strangers.* Should not we pray with the *Psalmist*, *Lord teach me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, that I may know how frail I am.* Those dark habitations in which we live will shortly crumble to dust. Upon this occasion, we are to lift our Eyes from the *Coffin* where his earthly remains are laid, to the place and company and employment of his *Soul*, where we shall be clothed with Light as the Angels of God and encompassed with the beams of Glory, where we shall have the *palms of victory put into our hands, crowns upon our heads,* and in our mouths *the songs of the blessed;* where we shall sit with the *Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles and Martyrs,* when we enter the City of Peace and of everlasting Rest in the *New Jerusalem.* How can we but sigh and groan for our deliverance from our present Bondage? When shall we be set at liberty

liberty from Corruption and Vanity, and satisfi'd with his Divine Likeness, when we shall for ever solemnize the Nuptials of the Lamb, and behold God *face to face*, and shall be changed unto his Glorious Image, when we are admitted to the Company of those Seraphims that fly round about the Throne, and sing to all Ages of Eternity, *Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts*. Does not the view of this Glory overcome our Spirits, and disengage us from the Earth? Why should the trifling interests of vanity ingross our thoughts, and the little apparitions and dreams of the Earth enchant us? O Christians think more frequently of your Country and of the incomprehensible Love of God, that *sent his Son to redeem you*; of the whole tendency of that excellent Religion, of the excellency of our own Souls, and *the light of his Countenance that is better than Life*. Let us steal frequently out of the hurry and noise and impertinence of our little business, unto those Regions of Light, and Peace, and Purity, unto *Mount Zion*, and unto *the City of the Living God*, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable Company of Angels, to the general

Heb.

The Thirteenth Sermon.

*general assembly and Church of the first
born, to God the Judge of all, and to the
Spirits of just men made perfect.*

*To God the Father, Son, and
Holy Ghost, be all Praise,
Power and Dominion, for
ever and ever, Amen.*

FINIS.

